

Surprise for Vera



Stars Organisation for Spastics Chairman Roger Moore surprised S.O.S. member Vera Lynn with a birthday cake when an S.O.S. meeting in March fell on her birthday. Story and picture on back page. Read more about Roger on page 9.

Bleak Budget adds to Society's cash crisis

BUDGET Day was Black Tuesday for The Spastics Society, already facing a financial crisis as a result of the crash in share values, and a staggering increase of 42 per cent in running costs on its schools and centres for spastics. There are now fears that increased costs brought about by the Budget measures, the sharp rise in food, fuel and salary costs, allied to the falling value of the £, will mean that the Society will not balance its budget this year.

As a result, shares might have to be sold—at the worst possible time because of the Stock Exchange slump—to keep the Society out of the red.

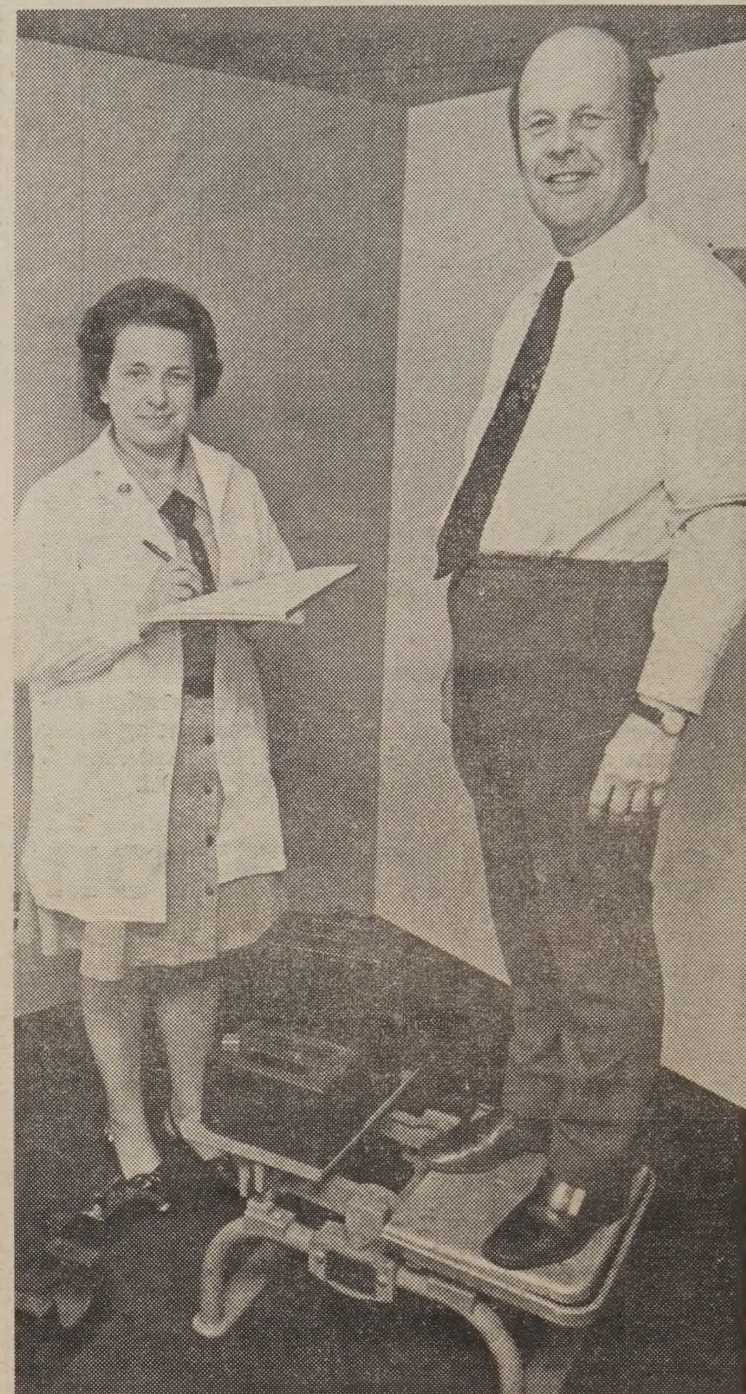
Over the years the Society has carefully husbanded its funds and invested money to pro-

vide the assured income needed by a service charity which has the continuing commitment to maintain residential establishments, and the many other welfare services offered to spastics and their families.

In spite of expert investment advice and constant review of its resources, the Society—in common with many other charities—has severely suffered from the fall in share values. It is estimated that the Society has lost about 20 per cent of its investment reserves over the past year.

Allied to this is the rise in running costs, due not only to the falling value of the £, but from increases in the price of food and fuel, and nationally-agreed salary scales. Every housewife knows how food prices have risen, but the Society housekeeps on a massive scale for the large "family" of heavily handicapped men, women and children in its schools, residential centres, hostels and workshops throughout the country.

All this was disastrous, but
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International experts gather at Oxford

DELEGATES and speakers from 16 countries will attend the International Cerebral Palsy Society's seminar with the theme, "The Handicapped Adolescent," at University College, Oxford, from 16th to 20th April. A remarkable feature of the seminar is that in addition to the gathering of the world experts, many spastics will be taking part to give their point of view on the important subjects to be discussed.

A full report of the seminar will appear in next month's Spastics News.

Fat figure for funds from big slim-in

Chocolate Easter eggs with gooey fattening centres will probably taste doubly delicious to the "new look" citizens of Shrewsbury. Their long fast in aid of spastics has come to an end, with a final sum of £1,250 raised—a fatter figure than the original estimate of £500. The money will go to help Shropshire Spastics Society's new Day Centre which is nearing completion at Monksmoor, Shrewsbury. The Society needed £1,000, and now they have enough for a few extras as well.

The sponsored slim-in, in which 135 slimmers took part, was supervised by Shrewsbury Council's Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures, Bob Holdaway. The picture shows him as his own first customer on the scales, watched by the Shrewsbury Chronicle's Staff Nurse Higgins. The Chronicle organised the slim-in and Mrs. Higgins gave dietary advice to the "shrinkers" of Shrewsbury.

It is hoped that the £50,000 Day Centre will be open in time for Easter.

Picture by courtesy of
The Shrewsbury Chronicle

Spastics News wins the first interview with

Mrs Mary Wilson

SPASTICS News is greatly privileged because this is the only interview that Mrs. Harold Wilson has granted to a journalist since her husband became Prime Minister at the February election.

"Come to 10 Downing Street," she told me when she telephoned to arrange the appointment. This was rather surprising as it had been announced that the Wilsons had decided to keep on their own Westminster home and not move into the official residence. However, I soon realised that Mrs. Wilson had

invited me to Number 10 because she felt it would be more interesting for me—a thoughtful gesture which is typical of Mary Wilson.

The interview took place in an elegantly proportioned drawing room on an upper floor. It contained some beautiful old paintings and 18th century furniture. The uphol-

stery and curtains were in a warm shade of gold silk.

Despite the hundreds of good causes she is asked to support and her many official duties as Prime Minister's wife, Mrs. Wilson has once again agreed to judge the poetry section of this year's Literary Contest for spastics. She will also present the prizes to winners in all sections at a special reception at the Society's Park Crescent headquarters during Spastics Week.

Mrs. Wilson has been involved with the Literary Contest every year since it was first started in 1971. She says she was asked "out of

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Spastics News reporter Anne Plummer was the first, and only journalist to win an interview with the Prime Minister's wife after the election. But they had met before—when Anne won a prize in the Society's literary contest for spastics and Mrs. Wilson made the presentation.

Big effort for Spastics Week

THIS month sees the culmination of months of effort by staff and volunteers throughout the country, to make the 1974 Spastics Week a nationwide success. The Week runs from Sunday, April 28, to Saturday, May 4.

The Prime Minister's wife, Mrs. Mary Wilson, is already judging entries for the Literary competition, the prizes for which she will present as one of the highspots of a week of feverish activity.

Brian Rix, a member of the Stars Organisation for

Spastics, is giving the address at the Service of Dedication at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. The first lesson will be read by Peter Kinnerson, a pupil of the Society's Thomas Delarue School in Kent. He will also be singing, and recently won a first and a second prize at the Tunbridge Wells Festival of Music and Drama. The Society's Senior Clubs and Holidays Officer, Mr. William Hargreaves, will be reading the second lesson.

The staff at headquarters

plans to beat last year's record takings of more than £200, at a Bring and Buy Sale at the end of this month. The aim is to sell off over £250 worth of home-made goodies, White Elephant stall, curiosities, books, tins, and bottles of produce, in two hours.

Plans are also being made to see if an exhibition of Morris Dancing can be displayed in Paternoster Square near St. Paul's Cathedral.

Throughout the country volunteers will be out working hard to raise funds and bring the needs of spastics to the nation's attention.

Sophisticated mechanical aids help spastics — and other disabled people — to a new dignity and ease of communication. Today two writers give their personal experiences of a new invention called the Light-writer, and the way users of Possum electronic equipment have joined together for mutual help



Graham Hill "chats" with Bernard Brett on the invention described in the article. Mr. Brett met the famous racing driver when he was a finalist for the Society's Achievement Award. Mr. Hill was a member of the judging panel.

Communication through new Light-writer

A RECENT exciting invention called a Light-writer brings easier means of communication to many gravely disabled persons who are either unable to speak or are also deaf. The Light-writer has a standard typewriter keyboard which is electrically connected to a panel where the letters and words are illuminated as the keys are pressed. The panel can take up to about 10 words at a time and they vanish off the end of the tape as the operator talks. There is also a method of rubbing out in an instant, the words which have been written on the panel. The whole unit is powered by a small but heavy battery, although the inventors hope to

make future production models, either mains or batteries.

Having used a letter board on which I point to the letters, for 20 years, I am finding the Light-writer a great boon, particularly if I am talking to strangers or passers-by, because they find it much less frightening than my former means of communication. Not that this Light-writer is likely to take the place fully of my letter-board, but it does make communication with strangers 50 times easier than it has been in the past.

The Light-writer was invented and developed by Toby Churchill of Cambridge, together with some engineering friends who have formed themselves into a limited company.

Toby was an engineering apprentice in Sudbury until about five years ago, when some unknown virus struck him down and left him largely paralysed and without the power of speech. The virus appears to have caused grave brain damage, so that in effect Toby has joined the spastic fraternity.

However, he took a degree in science and has given his life to designing equipment for the disabled. Remarkably enough, Toby says that even before he became disabled himself, he had been interested in designing equipment for the disabled. From his experience, and my own, we find the Light-writer can help to bridge the gap in communication which makes life for those who can't speak more difficult than it need be.

Like any other invention, the Light-writer is by no means cheap, costing about £400 at this stage of its development, but Toby Churchill and his colleagues hope once they can start producing four or five Light-writers a month or, better still, a week, then the costs of production can be drastically cut.

I feel sure that there is a strong case for organisations such as The Spastics Society as well as the National Health Service, to assist persons who are literally dumb to acquire such items of equipment so that some of the barriers which divide them from the rest of the community can be reduced or abolished.

There must be hundreds, if not thousands, of disabled people who could benefit from having the use of the Light-writer. It is up to us to see that there is sufficient demand for this invention to be developed and made even more mobile for those who need its aid.

When the Light-writer was recently shown on the BBC TV series "Tomorrow's World," a great deal of interest was shown in it. I have been stopped by many people both in Britain and the Republic of Ireland who have asked if I have seen the machine.

This is just another example of one disabled person being able to help many others through thought and ingenuity.

Bernard Brett



Work Centre boys help spina bifida children

Martin Kirchen and Brian Bennett, both 23, and trainees at The Spastics Society's Chester Work Centre, have used their engineering skills to adapt a bicycle for spina bifida children.

They converted the bike so that it could be operated by hand instead of a foot pedal. The work involved making a special gear wheel as it was impossible to buy one.

The boys are pictured handing over the bicycle to children at the unit for physically handicapped in Chester. Left to right are Jane Harris, Martin Kirchen, Lesley Rigby and Brian Bennett.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Kitts of North Ashton Social Club, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Lancashire, have raised over £200 from events at the club for Wigan and District Spastics Society.

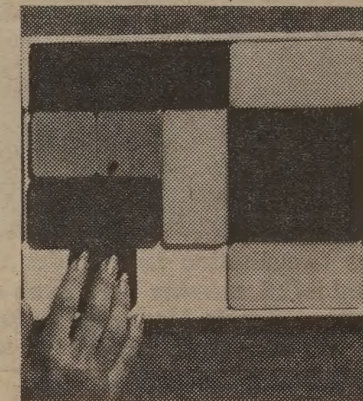
Mind-bending games for spastics who enjoy a challenge

QUADRANT 4 have taken a sophisticated look at the games people play and produced two fascinating versions of age-old puzzles. They are marketed by the Kidderminster firm as executive toys — the kind of thing to take a busy businessman's mind off complicated business problems and relax him working them out — if he can.

However, it is not only the high-powered executive who will find the games useful. The Spastics Society's Occupational Therapist, Anne Richardson, thinks they will be invaluable to any spastics who enjoy a challenge, either physical or mental.

One, Chinese Patience, consists of a base with three spikes and a set of gaily coloured Perspex rings. The idea is to transpose the rings from the first to third peg using one ring at a time and never letting a larger ring land on a smaller one. Anne commented: "This is really a modern version of the old Span game which has been used in therapy departments for years. It is not only fun but, equally important, can help to build up hand actions such as grasping, releasing and stretching."

The other game, "Drop Out," consists of blocks of bright coloured Perspex on a tray, and the object is to get the largest block to slide out. It says

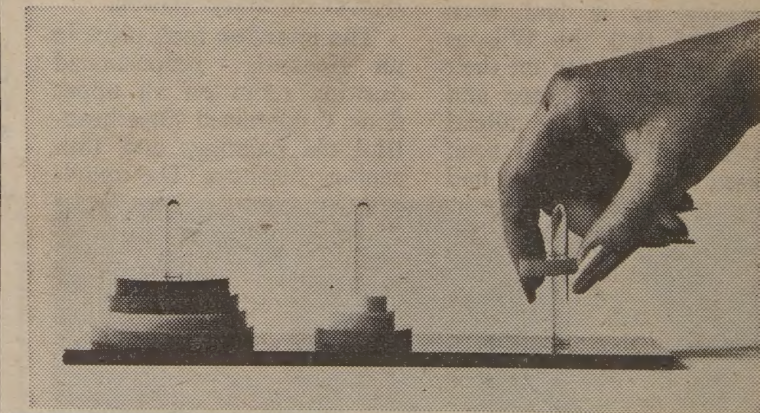


The games people play — Drop Out, above, which taxes the mind, and Chinese Patience, below, which helps strengthen hand control. Both are marketed by Quadrant 4 as executive toys.

Pictures by courtesy of ICI Plastics

much for the game's intricacy that the solution can be obtained from Quadrant 4.

The two games, which are both "floor size," are part of the toy exhibition at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square, and can be obtained direct from Quadrant 4, Shakenhurst, Cleobury Mortimer, nr. Kidderminster, Worcs. They cost approximately £2 each.



Are You a Good Cook?

You certainly will be if you purchase a copy of the **SHERARDS COOK BOOK.**

Produced in aid of Sherrards Training Centre, a most comprehensive book full of exciting, well-proven recipes from many parts of the U.K. and abroad. Good value at 60p, plus p. and p. 10p. Sent by return from: Sherrards Training Centre, Digswell Hill, Welwyn, Herts., AL6 9AW.

All profits go to help train spastics at the Centre.

Possum people get together for mutual support

THOUGH the Possum Users Association has now been in existence for five years, there are still a large number of people who believe that if a person is severely physically disabled he must be mentally deficient as well, and quite incapable of any work. But with electronic equipment such as Possum, work is not an impossibility, and with one unit supplied by the Department of Health, even the most severely disabled can control their environment.

This unit is normally known as the PSUI, and it allows a disabled person by either slight suction on a tube, or pressure on a micro-switch, to switch on and off up to 11 different electrical appliances

from this one control. Normally there is an alarm bell and buzzer (for non-emergency) calling, followed by an intercom and door lock, to allow the user to speak to visitors and then, if he wishes, unlock the door. There can then be connected a light, radio, television, heater, fan, and any other electrical equipment including the telephone. The telephone, which is connected and has a special control fitted by the Post Office, is still operated through the PSUI tube or switch, and allows the disabled person to answer calls, and dial with just the same suction or light pressure required to operate the other items.

But to attempt work it is essential to have an electronic typewriter control system such as Possum. To operate a normal electric typewriter the disabled user can just blow and

suck on a tube, or, if he has slight finger or toe movement, he can have up to eight light switches to give faster control. But even with just a pneumatic control, speeds of 30 to 40 words per minute have been achieved by P.U.A. members. It is also possible to have control of a tape-recorder through this same Possum unit, and this can be most useful for taking telephone messages or orders for a business.

But P.U.A. does not exist purely to purchase Possum equipment as some people may think. We aim to help our members with any type of equipment they may require, and we have already helped several members with small pieces of equipment, and helped towards the cost of a special vehicle conversion. We are always glad to receive any requests for assistance with the purchase of equipment, and our only condition for considering such a request is that the person must

be a member of the Association, which is important for VAT purposes.

It is often wrongly assumed that our Association is connected, sponsored, or in some way part of Possum Controls Ltd., the manufacturers of the equipment. This is quite false. We are a totally independent charity, with independent funds, and an independent and strong minded Committee of Management which consists entirely of physically disabled people. This last fact I believe makes us more sympathetic to our members' urgent needs.

If you would therefore like to know more about our Association and, perhaps become an Associate Member (which is open to anyone interested) then please write to me, Robert Bowell, "Copper Beech", Parry's Close, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, BS9 1AW.

Robert Bowell



What a day for Mr. T. Noddings, of Brinkburn Drive, Darlington, County Durham. Not only did he receive a new Vauxhall Viva car, but the keys were presented to him by Michele Dotrice, left, and Sylvia Syms. Sylvia, an active member of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, is Chairman of the Good Neighbours House project at Camberwell in London, which will provide a new residential centre for adult spastics.



A smile that says everything from Mr. A. Tarling of Orchard Park Estate, Hull, Yorks., as he receives congratulations and the keys of his Vauxhall Viva from Clive Sullivan, Rugby League captain of Hull and Great Britain.



Picture above: A 15-minute study of a competition featured in the Spastics Pool weekly bulletin results in a new car for British Railways clerk Peter Smerdon, of Bath Road, Keynsham. Peter and his wife Joy were presented with a Vauxhall Viva De Luxe by the Bristol Rovers footballers, Alan Warboys and Bruce Bannister, at the

showroom of Welch & Co. The car was one of 10 second prizes in the recent competition for supporters of the Spastics Pool.

After the formal presentation, Peter Smerdon handed the keys to his wife Joy. "She is the driver," he said, "and despite a new car I don't think I will learn to drive."

Splashes from the Spastics Pool

Holiday prizes galore

TEN holidays for two in Australia are offered as prizes in the latest competition for Spastic Pool supporters. The three weeks holiday "down under" will mean an opportunity of a lifetime for the lucky winners in a competition based on football.

David Miller, sports writer for the Daily Express, has compiled a list of 12 First Division footballers, from which entrants will be asked to select eight who have done the most for their clubs during the current season. The closing date will be April 30th.

Exciting

With 100 second prizes of Sovereign holidays for two in Cyprus, and 1,000 third prizes of £10, this is the most exciting competition ever for supporters of the Pool.

Qantas, the Australian national airline, will fly the first prize winners to their dream holiday or to visit friends and relatives in Australia. But that is not all. Return flights can be interrupted for the winners to stop off in New Zealand, South Africa, U.S.A. or Canada.

To coincide with the competition, a special incentive scheme for collectors commenced on March 30th. By increasing their membership over a period of five weeks all official collectors of the Pool will receive hundreds of special seals. The seals may be exchanged for items from their gift brochure, vouchers for use in leading stores, or towards the cost of any holiday or travel arrangements made through Top Ten Travel.



Stan Stennet took time off from his show at the Pavilion, Porthcawl, to present a cheque to second dividend winner Mrs. D. Bellinger, of Marlpit Lane, Porthcawl. Also in the picture are the area supervisor, Mr. G. Blamires, and collector Mrs. Lorna Richards.



When Top Ten Travel's third Agency in Bristol opened recently, passers-by in Broad Walk, Knowle, were invited by five attractive young ladies in Bulgarian national costume to join them in a glass of wine to celebrate the official opening. Our picture shows Douglas Arter, Director of Top Ten Travel, cutting the tape.



A party of 50 from the Isle of Wight recently visited Bristol and Westmorland House, headquarters of Top Ten Promotions Ltd. Led by supervisor Terry Divers, the visitors arrived at mid-day for lunch and, after a sightseeing tour of the city, spent several hours at Westmorland House.

Neighbourly goodwill helps Scottish funds

A SPLENDID neighbourly farewell gesture by Edinburgh hotelier Mrs. I. M. Bruce and her staff at Ellersley House Hotel in organising a Spring Fayre, has realised well over £750 for the funds of the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics.

Mrs. Bruce, proprietress of Ellersley House Hotel for the past 13 years, gave up the hotel in March in order to concentrate her energies on her other hotel, the Gordon Bruce, but felt she could not leave without showing appreciation of the work done by her near neighbours. For just across the road from Ellersley House is Westerlea Residential School for Spastic Children, the Murrayfield day Centre for Spastic Children and, appropriately, the Appeal headquarters of the Scottish Council.

"We shall miss Mrs. Bruce very much, and not least for this quite outstanding effort on our behalf," commented Cdr. Archie Cameron, Director of the Council.

Do you like Beethoven?

MRS. Anita Loring is offering a complete set of Beethoven's nine symphonies recorded by the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Otto Klemperer, to any spastic who is a devotee of the composer.

The records are for the personal use of anyone who would enjoy them, and those interested should contact Mrs. Loring at The International Cerebral Palsy Society, 20/22 Mortimer Street, London, W1A.

What the papers say . . .

The Spastics Society has always been grateful to the national and local Press for the way it helps our work by publicising the needs of spastics. They help the disabled by making the community aware of their special problems. Two recent articles which are reproduced today, show how sympathetically journalists wrote about two Society centres. Their independent reports show what the (other) papers say about our work.



Assets to society said the Essex County Standard

SPASTICS — one of the most misunderstood groups in the country. Though often severely handicapped physically, they are often as alert as anyone else, and in a more enlightened age "normal" people are finally beginning to appreciate this. Nowhere is this more the case than in the village of Kelvedon, where 14 spastics from all over the country live at their own special centre, The Grange.

Originally an annexe of the Prested Hall Centre — the world's first residential centre for adult spastics — the Grange's parent home is Drummonds at nearby Feering. Both are Spastics Society homes.

Workshop

Everyday life at the Grange centres on the workshop, where residents prove to themselves and the world that they are by no means useless members of society.

The number and variety of

items they make is impressive. Soft toys, shopping bags, wind-screen washleathers, stools, table mats, jewellery, watch straps, belts, and lots more. Together with items from Drummonds, the little shop at the workshop boasts a selection of 140 different products.

Other work carried out there includes industrial sub-contracting, like assembling car radio components or packing toys. The dying art of chair caning is being revived, and people take along their broken chairs for repair. Another popular line is wallets for bowls score cards, and one of the latest orders for the centre's basket making came from a Colchester firm wanting a hundred in-trays.

Goods made by the spastics are on sale at the workshop, and are taken to county fairs and some markets, too. New customers are always welcome at the workshop.

Warden of the Grange (and of Drummonds, too), is Raymond Smith. Manager of the workshop is Don Butlin, who is helped out by Muriel McIntosh and Violet Newman.

"We insist on high standards of workmanship because we don't want to sell anything merely because it's made by spastics," Ray explained. "We give value for money."

"The profits go directly to the residents for pocket money and they save and contribute to their own cost of living. Some of the money goes towards the cost of paying for holiday package visits to Majorca—no more expensive and much more enjoyable and recuperative than exchanges with other institutions."

Difficulty

He talked of the difficulty in making people understand the residents were not mentally handicapped. "There is always the tendency to suppose that because they are physically handicapped and look rather grotesque in some respects, there is some kind of mental abnormality," he explained.

"People tend to talk to them in the third person. They say, 'Oh, look, he can talk.' Our folk are more or less used to this now and take it pretty much as a joke."

The spastics' working day is by no means dull drudgery because their sense of humour is so pronounced. After work—which starts at 9 in the morning and goes on until 4.30 in the afternoon—many trips are arranged. Trips to the theatre, to the wrestling, or anywhere of interest.

Despite their handicaps, the residents work and play hard, and they're doing very nicely, thank you. —S.A.

Article and pictures reproduced by courtesy of the Essex County Standard.



Picture above left: Sharing a joke while they assemble electrical components are (going round the table), Alf Cocksedge, Mary Moon, Norman (Nobby) Bilton, Peggy Salter and Ray Smith. Looking on is another Ray Smith, warden of the Grange (left) and workshop manager Don Butlin. Above: Carpenter Ron Dowsett making stools. Picture below shows a selection of products made by spastics at the Grange.

Spastics prepare to meet challenge of world outside

said the Lancaster Guardian

NOT so many years ago, physically and mentally handicapped people were outcasts of society, the butt of jest and often hidden away in shame by parents to whom they were an embarrassment.

Today, thanks to the work of The Spastics Society, they are being prepared to take their rightful place in the life of the nation.

The idea that these unfortunate could be trained to work and make a useful contribution to the economy was undreamed of until comparatively recent times.

The Industrial Training Centre for spastics in Slyne Road, Lancaster, is a step forward in the battle to achieve rehabilitation of the physically disabled.

The disabled's greatest need has been and always will be a vocation — something constructive to do to make them feel useful and alive. Few fit people are happy doing nothing, it being human nature to seek active participation and involvement either in work or in recreation. What is true of the fit person is equally true of the unfit, a need recognised by The Spastics Society, which set up a training centre in Hertfordshire and a clerical unit at Stockport, under Mrs. V. S.

Parker, who transferred to the Lancaster Training Centre when it was opened in 1958.

The Industrial Training Centre for Spastics in Slyne Road is a three-storey purpose

built building with residential accommodation for 81 people. The trainees, of all ages, come from every part of the United Kingdom to attend an eight to nine months course in engineering and other clerical duties

there. They are pre-selected in their home areas for their particular training and under Mr. John Parkinson, the General Manager, receive instruction

from a small staff of expert trainers.

In comfortable and well organised surroundings the trainees are taught light engineering and clerical duties within the limits of the trainees' capabilities, for sad though it is, these young people are permanently disabled, and as we see them today so shall we see them 10, 20 and even 40 years from now.

Great supporters of the Centre are industrial firms from all over the country, who sub-contract small unit requirements to the Centre to be executed by trainees. Thus work done by spastics in training is in itself a very good advertisement for their future employment in factories in or near their home towns. For, as Mr. Parkinson said: "Although the firms give their contracts to the Spastics Centre, they rightly expect a first class job in return." And this they get, justifying the 99 per cent contract work handled by the Centre on behalf of British industry.

Picture, left, shows Instructress Mrs. D. McManus checking as Barry Fox and Sharon Solon make bearing assemblies for conveyor belts at the Spastics Training Centre, Lancaster.

A contracts engineer and qualified staff help fix the estimate given to the firm—an estimate which is in no way cut price because the work is done by spastics, but as competitive as one would expect from an outside contractor.

Girls are in the majority in the clerical department, although some boys who find the work suitable to their disability also work there and receive instruction in simple book-keeping, photo copying, card operating, switchboard duties, and simple typing.

At the Centre they follow a routine geared to prepare them for their entry for the first time into the Big Busy World outside. Most of the younger trainees have lived in Special Schools or, attending Secondary Modern Schools, have lived at home, but in most cases this is their first job partly because they were previously untrained for a working life and partly on account of their age.

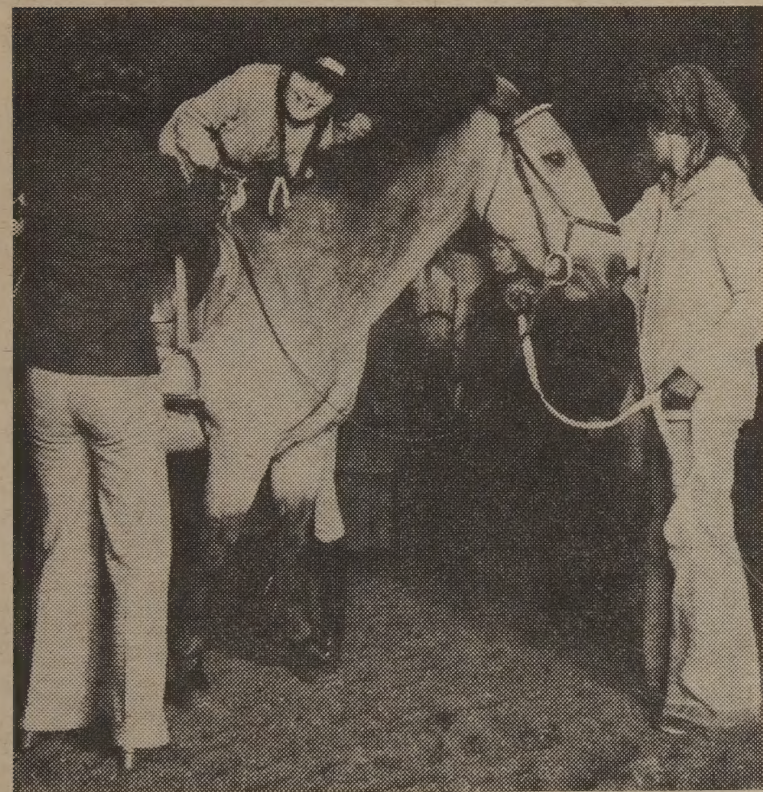
An exciting exercise in money management is carried out during the trainees' last four weeks when they are put in pairs into a twin-bedded room and told to look after themselves. The Centre provides them with money out of



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Judith, Jeffrey and Evangeline Hunter-Jones silhouetted in the doorway of the Riding School.



Katie Scott and Chris Abel-Smith hold Sweetcorn while Rossella mounts up.

Spastics ride at Household Cavalry barracks

KNIGHTS BRIDGE

barracks in the heart of fashionable London is a world apart from the rest of the milling metropolis. While big red London buses and impatient taxis whizz past on the crowded roads, a very different life exists beyond the imposing ceremonial arch. Elegant young officers drill with swords in the square, while troopers scurry about tending to more mundane military tasks.

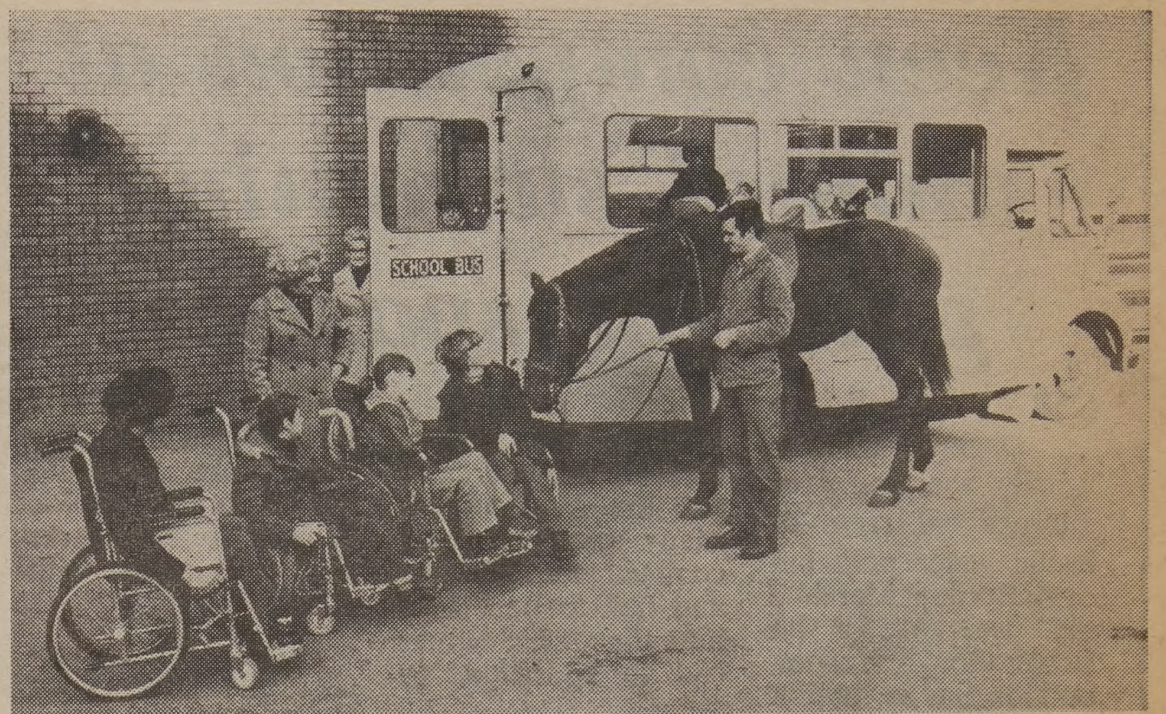
But once a week at lunch-time there is an invasion, and the home of the Queen's Household Cavalry takes on a new role, when two coach loads of spastic children arrive from two South London schools for the physically handicapped.

They attend a riding session run by the Riding for the Disabled Association and for the best part of an hour and a half they discard their wheelchairs and crutches and take to the saddle.

They do not, of course, ride the magnificent beasts from the Cavalry stables. As one of the officers explained: "These horses are a bit too big and strong for them." Instead they mount six good-natured ponies owned by Mr. Ross Nye of Bathurst News. They need to be good-natured with handicapped children on their backs, and when Spastics News visited a class recently a new pony, Chester, was being schooled for the first time.

Liz Acland, the organiser, explained: "We had to get rid of one last week—he turned out to be a biter!"

The children have been riding at the Barracks for nearly a year. They started off with sessions at the Royal



Trooper Stephen Forward brings Uganda to say hello to Lionel, Garry, Maria and Jeffrey.

Mews, where the Queen's horses are schooled, but the demand soon grew too great.

"When the Royal Mews couldn't cope we came here because it is the only other indoor riding school in London," said Mrs. Acland. "We get a grant from the Inner London Education Authority and friends chipped in with cash to get us going. My saddlery bill couldn't have been more than £30 or £40."

Saddlery is of vital importance because of the children's handicaps. Instead of the ordinary stirrups they use a special kind called Devonshire boots. Made of leather and shovel shaped, they prevent the children's feet slipping through. Otherwise, in the event of a mishap, there is a danger of their ankles getting trapped. The children also wear belts around them with straps for their helpers to hang on to.

"We have three helpers to each child—one to lead and two each side. They are all friends who have the time to help and nearly all have considerable riding experience."

The helpers, in their silk headscarves, seem to enjoy the experience as much as the children from Balham and Streatham. Many of them come up from their country homes specially to lend a hand. As one of them said: "I wanted something useful to do, and I find this terribly rewarding." They are just as much at home at exclusive functions as the magnificent riding school, exhorting children to hold on tight.

The children are not in the slightest bit overawed by their surroundings and enjoy themselves immensely. "They each have their own riding hats with their names on, and take their lessons very seriously."

"If it wasn't for their handi-

caps, one or two of them would be very good riders indeed," said Mrs. Acland. "They have improved tremendously since they've been riding. It gives them a totally different experience instead of being stuck in a wheelchair or slowly moving about on crutches. They are on a living, moving animal, and it exercises a great many muscles. It teaches them control and once on a horse they very often don't appear any different to other children."

The children have to be lifted on to their steeds in most cases—no mean task for the helpers who sometimes get a soldier to lend a hand, although there is a mounting block for the more able children to use. "In fact, the achievement of actually mounting by themselves instead of being lifted on by a strapping great soldier is worth half a dozen rides round the circuit," Mrs. Acland said. "You see them struggling and when they succeed it's a terrific thrill—for them and us."

The children ride gently

round in a ring and then play games, moving in patterns round up-turned buckets.

The instructress is Jo Meyer, who has nothing but praise for her pupils. "They've improved out of all recognition, both physically and mentally. One child whose legs were very twisted has much more control over them, and a little girl who never took any notice of anything has come right out of herself."

"They were very timid at first, of course, but the fact that something else can move for them has increased their confidence. They are all terribly enthusiastic."

All too soon the hour and a half is over, and the 14 children from Greenmead and Cots-wold schools have to say goodbye to their favourites—Sweetcorn, Garnet and the rest. Then it's back to school with two feet on the ground instead of four.

LIZ COOK



Jeffrey rides high, assisted by Evangeline Hunter-Jones, Diane Harrap and Tessa McCosh.

Sunshine holidays for Jacques Hall residents

INSTEAD of new cookers, washing machines and other major items, the Friends of Jaques Hall are investing their resources in sun, sea and sand. They are sending the 24 residents of the centre on an "away-from-it-all" holiday.

Mr. John Mitura, the Warden, explained: "They thought it would be nicer this year to spend the money

on more personal things than laundry equipment! It is very exciting for the residents because none of them has been abroad before. Now they are busy getting the photos taken and their passports ordered."

The residents will fly from Gatwick, six at a time with five helpers, to Callella, a sunshine resort near Benidorm.

"We chose it because of economy, but not only was it cheapest, the hotel there was best suited for our needs," The week-long holidays are starting in May and will finish in September.

The holidays will cost £1,200 and special fund-raising events will be held to pay for them.

Amongst the residents in each group will be one engaged couple. However, the holidays will not be honeymoons. "We haven't had any marriages yet," said Mr. Mitura, "but we're keeping our fingers crossed."

The £260 proceeds of a sponsored swim held by Teesside Lions has been handed to the Teesside Spastics Society. The money will be put towards the purchase of a new high-speed wire-cutting machine at the spastics work centre in Middlesbrough.

Pat will be remembered

OAKWOOD Further Education Centre, run by The Spastics Society, is to be endowed by the parents of Pat Newton, who died there at the age of 26 in February.

Pat, who despite her disabilities had obtained three 'O' levels, had been a student at Oakwood for three years. Her parents are endowing the Centre in recognition of the happiness Pat found there with people of the same age and interests.

Mrs. M. Moncaster, the Society's Regional Social Worker, who knew her, said: "Before going to Oakwood she had been at a day centre, where she hadn't been able to fully utilise her potential. Going to Oakwood made all the difference to her. She continued her studies, wrote plays, travelled abroad, and was deeply involved with the local Baptist Church. She died in her sleep and it was a very great shock to all who knew her."

"She will be greatly missed—she was a girl of tremendous character."

Prisoners want to help, but how?

LIFE-SENTENCE prisoners at the top security jail at Wakefield are posing The Spastics Society's North East Regional Officer, Mr. R. Whyte, quite a problem.

For they are keen to help the Society, but the question is how

"Originally I approached them about making articles to go on sale in the charity gift shops. I met about 15, and they are very enthusiastic. The idea is for them to produce something in their cells when the working day is over. However, as it is a top security prison, they can hardly make something that would require hacksaws and hammers. I want to make use of their talents, but at the moment I'm still looking for suitable ideas. It really is a headache," said Mr. Whyte.

He is hoping to think of something soon that will give pleasure to the prisoners to work on once the cell doors are locked for the night and prove a best-seller in the shops.

Keen competition at annual swimming gala for spastics

CRYSTAL Palace Olympic Pool is usually the scene of international races or hectic water polo but on Saturday March 2 the pace was a bit slower though the competition was as "hot" if not hotter. For on this Saturday the pool and the smaller side pool was turned over to The Spastics Society for its annual swimming gala for spastics.

From all over England came 120 handi-

capped competitors from special schools, adult centres and clubs for the handicapped. Many swimmers were confined to wheelchairs and had to be helped into the water. Others had to be helped to swim.

The Spastics Society organised the event with students from Nonington Physical Education College and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School acting as time keepers, helpers, In all there were 47

rescuers and escorts. main events and many more heats. Races included breast stroke, back stroke, relay races and swimming with aids.

Parents, friends, teachers and trainers lined the poolside and listened to the lilting Welsh tones of announcer Emlyn Davies. The Spastics Society's Welsh Region Senior Regional Officer, as he read out the results, which are printed below.

Certificates were awarded to:

Thomas Delarue School, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

Certificate for 1st place: Stephen Kerry; Ian Johnson (2); Peter Chadwick; Janet Lewis; Debra Reynolds (2); Anthony Griffin; Malcolm Lord; Anthony Honour (2); Simon Karner (2); Jane Warburton (2); Carole Matthews (2); Michael Smart (2) Bruce Bullen; Alun Francis (2).

Certificates for 2nd place: Janet Lewis; Vernon Hinkley (2); Arthur Bate;

Certificates for 3rd place: Malcolm Lord; Ian Whaley.

Valence Special School, Westerham, Kent.

Certificates for 1st place: David Jones; Marilena Nixon; Paul Munn; Georgina Solly (2); Christopher Button; John Waterton; Robert Martin; Simon Fuller; Ian Coleman; Zoe Breiner (3); Jackie Knight (2); Janet Ridge (3); Sandra Chappell; Susan Griffiths; Debra Rickman; Christopher Richardson (2); Alan Peachey; Timothy Richards (3); Timothy Tyler; Keith Ward; Paul Prinz (3); Barbara Solomon.

Certificates for 2nd place: Caroline Veness; Christopher Button; David Gibson; Jackie Knight; Barbara Gilbert; Ann Baker; Wendy Spillett; Royston Ratcliff (2).

Certificates for 3rd place:

Shaun Yarlett; Sally Kilminster; Robert Martin; Keith Ward.

Lancaster Training Centre, Slyne Road, Lancaster.

Certificates for 1st place: Thomas Forsyth; Roger Dyson; Patricia A. Creswell (2); Susan Miller (2); Jane Wallace; Jane Parkinson; Jane Kennedy; Robert Purvis (3); Joseph Armstrong; Shane Wilshaw.

Certificate for 2nd place: Jane Wallace; Jane Parkinson; Jane Kennedy; Shane Wilshaw.

Nonington Swim Club, Nr. Dover, Kent.

Certificate for 1st place: D. Barlow (2); A. McCallum; P. Launay.

Certificate for 2nd place: P. Launay.

Meldreth Manor School, Meldreth, Nr. Royston, Herts.

Certificate for 1st place: Jacqueline Widdup; Fenella Bearehell; Maria Rodriguez (2); Timothy Hines; Martin Jackson; Andrew West (2).

Certificate for 2nd place: John Davies; Christine Horth; Fenella Bearehell.

Sherrards Industrial Training Centre, Digswell Hill, Old Welwyn, Herts.

Certificate for 1st place: Neta Hutchinson (2); Bryan Pope (2); Kay Barraclough; Pat Fitzgerald (2).

Certificate for 2nd place: Martin Connock; Bryan Pope. Certificate for 3rd place: Gillian Harris.

Princess Marina Centre, Chalfont Lane, Seer Green, Bucks.

Certificate for 1st place: Alan J. Kerwin (2); Patricia Curson; Sylvia Richards.

Certificate for 2nd place: Brian Bowry.

Patcham House School, Brighton.

Certificate for 1st place: Jill Dean (3).

Certificate for 2nd place: Susan Bacon; Carl Brooks; Timothy Hughes (2).

Bristol & District Spastics Association.

Certificate for 1st place: Karen Infield (2); Malcolm Hegarty; Martin Hooper (2); Susan Holder (2); Josephine Kitchen (2); Shirley Gibson; Ann Trotman (3); Terry Clark (2); John Per (2); Duncan Joiner; Glyn Howells; Robert Iles; Alfred Harris.

Certificate for 2nd place: John Per; Malcolm Wood.

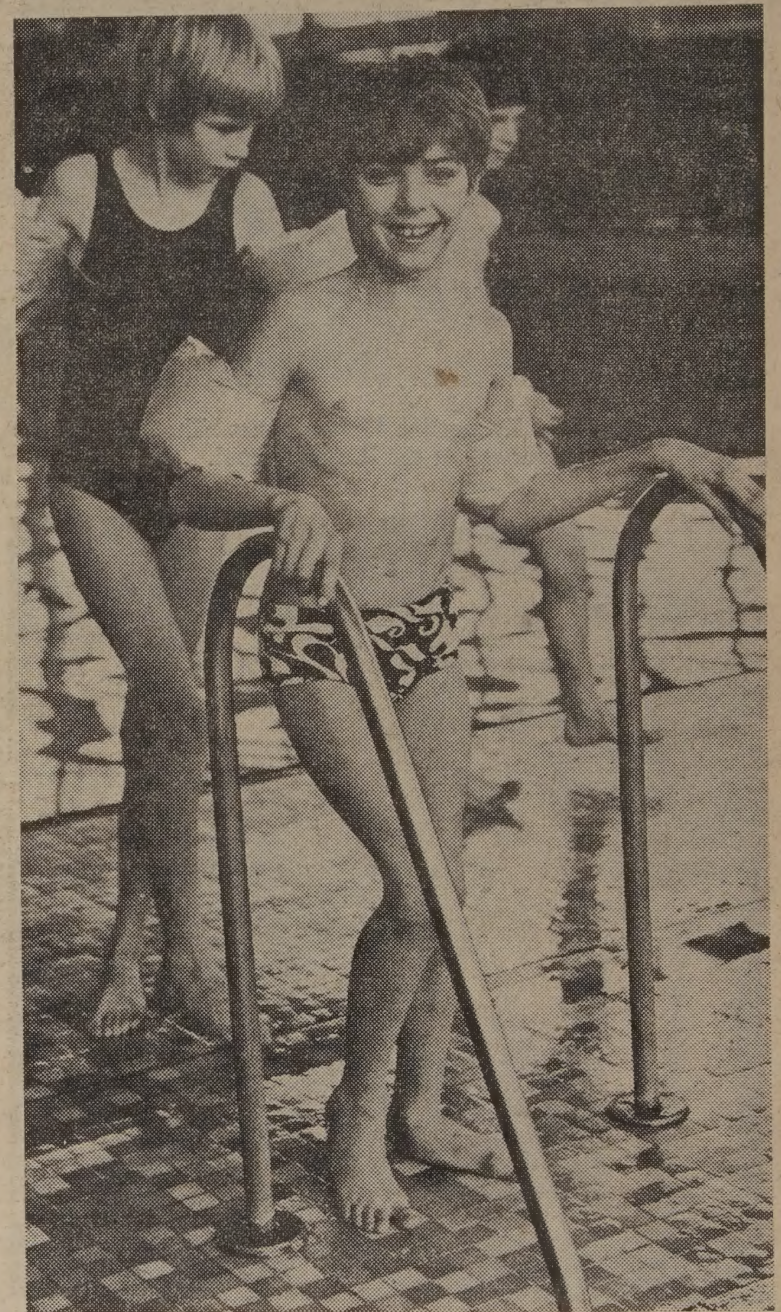
Certificate for 3rd place: Malcolm Hegarty; Malcolm Wood.

Dene Park Further Education Centre, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent.

Certificate for 1st place:

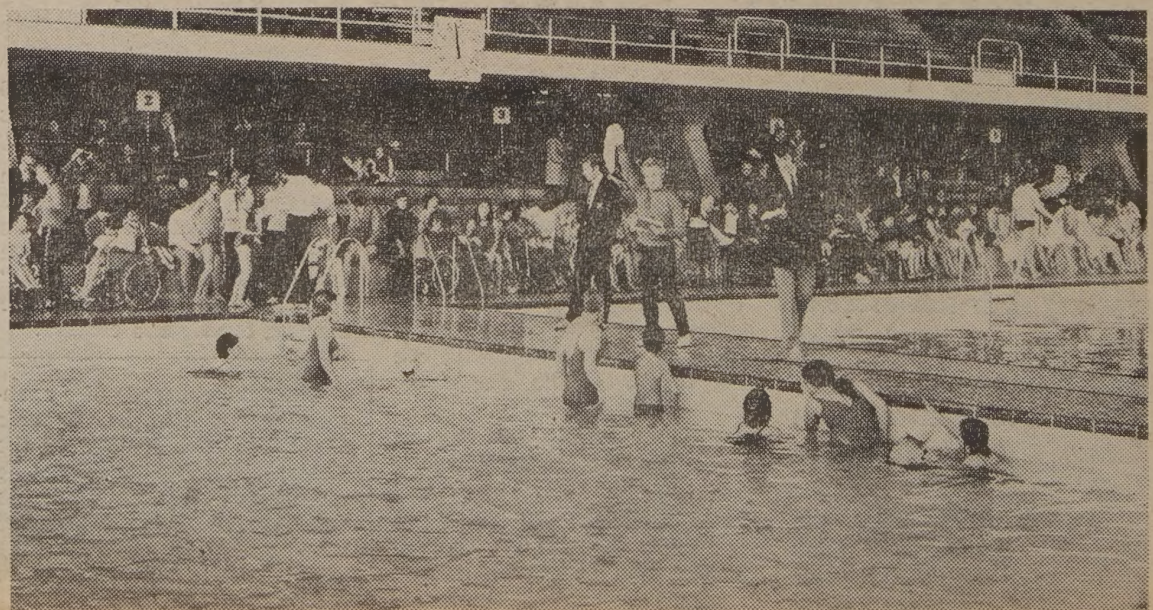


These are the girls of Nonington College of Physical Education who helped make the gala possible. They acted as lifesavers, timekeepers and helpers in and out of the water. They kept the losers smiling and congratulated the winners and they clocked up many miles in the water.



Below: There's a breathless hush in the pool as competitors get ready for the off. Along the side of the pool other competitors are tense waiting for their races. The organisers fuss and prepare the swimmers for their events. It contributed to the Swimming Gala's unique atmosphere of achievement — where it really was the taking part that counted and not the winning.

Pictured before his one length race, Paul Munn from Valence School in Westerham, Kent gets ready to enter the water. For him it was an extra special day as his parents were watching him swim for the first time. He'd been training hard since Christmas and they saw him win a first place certificate which went towards the 33 that Valence School collected to give them the team prize.



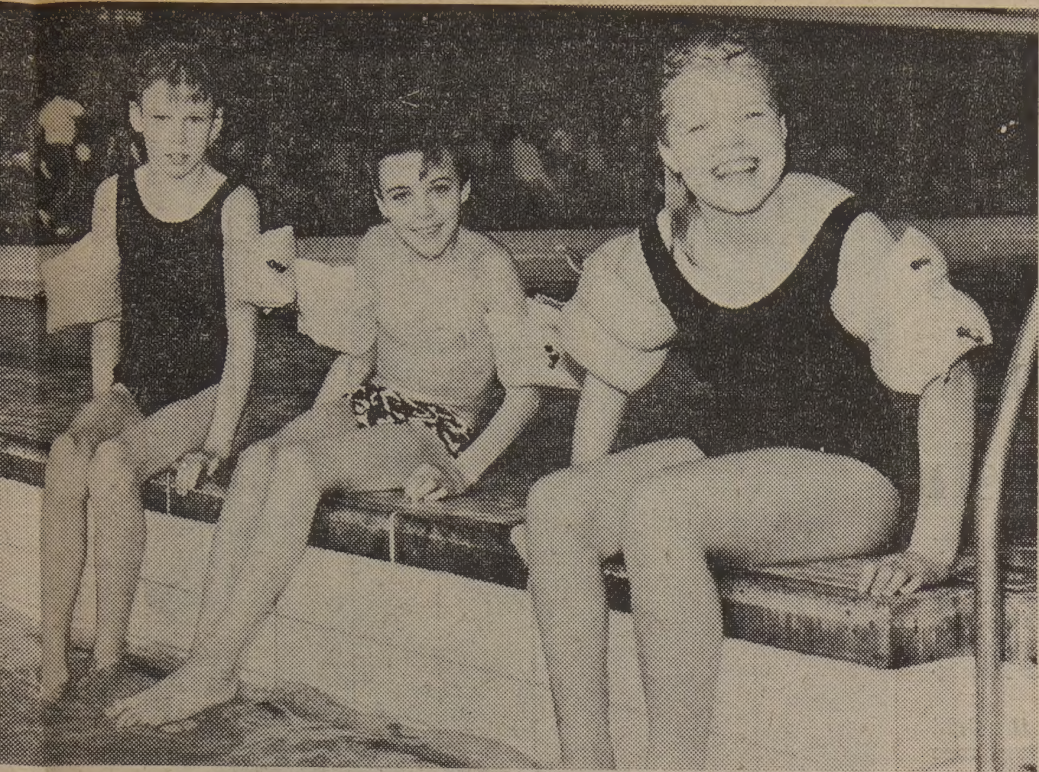
Meldreth Manor School fielded a strong team and even though their school is for the severely handicapped they managed to win 12 certificates. Pictured here are some of the Meldreth Manor team.

After the race (right) 12 year schoolfriend M

Looking thor 14 first places

Bristol and of them pict

Picture abov here at an ex in the Jun event, a mer Delarue team



At the race there's a welcome rest at the side of the pool. Pictured here are 12 year old Jaqueline Widdup from Meldreth Manor School and her friend 12 year old Christine Horth who took on nine year old Paul Munn from Valence School in a one length with aids race.



Being thoroughly pleased with themselves are the Lancaster team who won 1st places at the Gala.



Wrexham and District Spastics Association sent their team of swimmers—some of whom are pictured here—to great success at the Gala.



Below Caught an exciting point in the Junior Relay race. A member of the team is off with a member of the combined Valence and Nonington team just reaching the end of the pool. In the end the Delarue team of four—and they were pictured on the front page last issue—came in first with the Valence team second and a Meldreth team third.

Who cares whether I win? It's taking part that matters



Nine year old John Davis of Meldreth Manor School is what the swimming gala is all about. He can't walk very well but in the water "he's pretty hot stuff". Pictured here getting undressed for the race he's confident he's going to do well.



Now in the pool it's a case of hard swimming as John takes off in the junior assisted one width race . . . and at the end of the race it's all smiles—even though John didn't win.



Football fan barred from big match

FOR years, John Skinner, a heavily - handicapped spastic living in Greystones, the Denbighshire County Council home in Wrexham, has been a fervent supporter of the local football team. Every game the third division club has played, John has aimed to be there to give his encouragement. Club supporters always made sure he had a good view of the match from behind the goal and he travelled in the coach to Away matches.

So it came as a bitter blow when his favourites were drawn to take on first division giants Burnley in an important F.A. cup (6th round) match—and he was banned from the Burnley ground.

The reason for the banning is that stands are being renewed at the ground and club officials have ruled that the disabled will have to wait for the work to be completed. Normally handicapped spectators watched from the trainers' bench, and while building is going on they are barred. The Club also considers the area opposite this would also be unsuitable and constitute a hazard to both spectator and player.

Mrs. Noel Parry, President of the Wrexham Spastics Society, said: "John is a very keen sportsman and loves going to football and tennis matches. He follows Wrexham and had a seat on the coach and ticket for this match—it's a terrible disappointment for this highly intelligent man. He is also secretary of the local Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied Club. It's a great pity to penalise him like this."

Mr. Emlyn Davies, The Spastics Society's Senior Regional Officer in Wales, added: "I gather a lot of hard feeling has been created locally by the Burnley Club's ruling. It is a great pity that clubs which intend to improve their grounds could not provide alternative viewing facilities for the handicapped while work is in progress."

As it was, Wrexham went down to Burnley one-nil, so John was spared the sight of his team losing.

Full steam ahead to raise cash

THE Lincoln Spastic Society Show Committee are already gathering steam for their big fund-raiser, the Caenby Corner Steam Spectacular.

It is scheduled for Saturday, August 17, and Sunday, August 18, despite the threat of petrol shortages and rising prices.

The spectacular regularly proves a record-breaker, its steam engines and Showland organs having attracted well over 110,000 people since it started in 1969. It has so far raised more than £4,750 for local spastics.

This year it is hoped an audience of more than 30,000 will see a highly ambitious ring event with a branch of the armed forces which is currently being negotiated by the committee.

Mrs Wilson talks to Spastics News

Continued from Page 1

the blue" to judge the poetry section that year because her own first volume of poetry had been published shortly before. She was later invited to present the prizes to all the winners.

Round about the same time there was some press publicity given to Mr. Wilson's personal intervention in the case of one of his Huyton constituents, a highly intelligent spastic man who had been unable to find employment. With Mr. Wilson's help he was able to take a computer programming course and eventually obtain his first-ever job at the age of 41.

It is obvious that both Mr. and Mrs. Wilson really care about the individual problems of disabled people. Theirs is not the vaguely condescending "do-gooding" attitude so often found among people in public life.

Spastics Society staff who



Mrs Kathleen Trigg, of the Coltspring Riding Stables, near Sarratt, Hertfordshire, is pictured with a piece of Princess Anne's wedding cake, which arrived out of the blue. An accompanying letter read: "Her Royal Highness the Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips have asked that the enclosed wedding cake be sent to you, and would be grateful if you would distribute it, with their best wishes, amongst those working for the Riding for the Disabled Association."

For the past five years Mr. and Mrs. Trigg have provided free riding lessons for children from the Watford Spastics Centre. The Coltspring stable is a branch of the Riding for the Disabled Association, and the members were among those who contributed to a wedding present for the Princess, who is Patron of the Association.

Picture by courtesy of West Herts. and Watford Observer

Helpful news on problem feet

THE Disabled Living Foundation has published a book called "Footwear for Problem Feet" by M. D. England, OBE, FChS, of the London Foot Hospital. The book, illustrated by clear line drawings, is not meant for those who need orthopaedic shoes or with acute problems of foot health requiring doctor's or chiropodist's treatment.

"Footwear for Problem Feet" price £1.25, can be obtained from the Disabled Living Foundation, 346 Kensington High Street, London W14 8NS (Telephone 01-602 2491).

help out at the Literary Award reception every year have noticed with appreciation how Mrs. Wilson, after the official speeches are over, insists on mixing informally with the guests. She makes a point of talking personally with all the winners and their friends or relatives, listening patiently to halting speech, perhaps distorted even more by nervousness, or waiting for sentences to be spelled out on letter boards.

"And all this," as one member of the staff remarked, "before she's even had a chance to drink her own cup of tea."

Mary Wilson was born in Diss, Norfolk, the daughter of a Congregational minister. When she was five the family moved to Fulbourn, a village near Cambridge, where she spent the most impressionable years of her childhood. These early days are poignantly evoked in one of her published poems, "The Old Manse." Later they went to live in a Nottinghamshire mining town — "So I know a lot about miners," she told me.

It was while she was working in the North of England that she met Harold Wilson — "A Yorkshireman and proud of it" — at a tennis club. This was just before the war while he was a don at Oxford. They were married during the war and he became a Member of Parliament at the 1945 election.

Had she ever imagined then that he would one day become Prime Minister? I asked.

"If I had I should probably have run a mile in the opposite direction!" she laughed, but added more seriously that she was naturally very proud of her husband's achievements.

They have two sons, Robin aged 30, who is a lecturer with the Open University, and Giles, 25, a school teacher and an Open University student in his spare time. This is interesting, because the Prime Minister himself might be termed the father of the Open University. According to an article in the Guardian published on January 18th this year "... The O.U. was conceived on Easter

Sunday, 1963, in the Scilly Islands home of Harold Wilson ..."

I pointed out that many disabled people have reason to be grateful for the opportunities offered by the Open University, especially those of us who left school at a time when the conventional universities took a less enlightened view of disability. Mrs. Wilson said that although nothing could possibly make up for the frustrations of being handicapped, there was one advantage that the disabled have over most able-bodied people. They have more time for intellectual pursuits and for contemplation, which showed in the high standard of entries in the poetry section of the Literary Contest.

Writing poetry is, for Mary Wilson, a retreat from the clamour of public life into the private world of the spirit. She says that she would like to publish more poetry one day, but that as she writes very slowly it would be a long time before she had enough material to fill a book. Nowadays it is probably difficult for her to reconcile a crowded diary with the quietness of mind necessary for writing poetry.

Even weekends in the country at Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, are filled with local good causes — opening an Oxfam shop in Amersham, the Presidency of High Wycombe Savoy Opera Group, and visits to Stoke Mandeville Hospital for Spinal Injuries.

Yet, however many groups, societies and institutions claim Mary Wilson's time, she never loses sight of the fact that they are made up of individual human beings. As a final illustration of her courtesy and concern for other people's feelings, she not only arranged for me to be driven back to the Spastics News office at Park Crescent in an official car at the end of our interview, but accompanied me right out to the pavement of Downing Street.

Anne Plummer

Small change—big gifts

We told in Spastics News recently how Petty Officers from HMS Tiger had saved up oddments of foreign currency to buy presents for the Gosport, Fareham and District Spastics Society.

Our picture shows Petty Officer R. Rogers, centre right, of HMS Tiger, presenting a framed television licence to Mr. F. Apps, Chairman of the Gosport Group.

The licence goes with the portable television shown in the picture, which was one of the gifts. The sailors have promised to renew the licence every year.



Fighting for the Aborigines with his paintbrush

MAURICE Lindars, deputy head of the Chiltern House family help unit run by The Spastics Society in Oxford, has begun a one-man campaign to help the Australian Aborigines.

And his weapon in the fight to aid this much-deprived race of people is his paint brush.

Maurice, 45, is a State Registered Nurse and came to know the Aborigines when he lived in Australia from 1960 to 1969. He saw how their numbers dwindled and the appalling conditions in which they were forced to live, suffering from malnutrition and leprosy with little hope of improving their lot. Government reforms are under way but, in the meantime, since his return to England, Maurice has built up an extensive collection of paintings illustrating their myths and beliefs.

Although he has had no formal artistic training, he has been painting since the age of eight. His pictures, he hopes, will make people aware of the Aborigine culture which fascinates him and which is fast disappearing. He feels the Aborigines are the most deprived ethnic group in the world. Their life-style of 20,000 years is disintegrating with the development of towns in the Outback and the influx of white people.

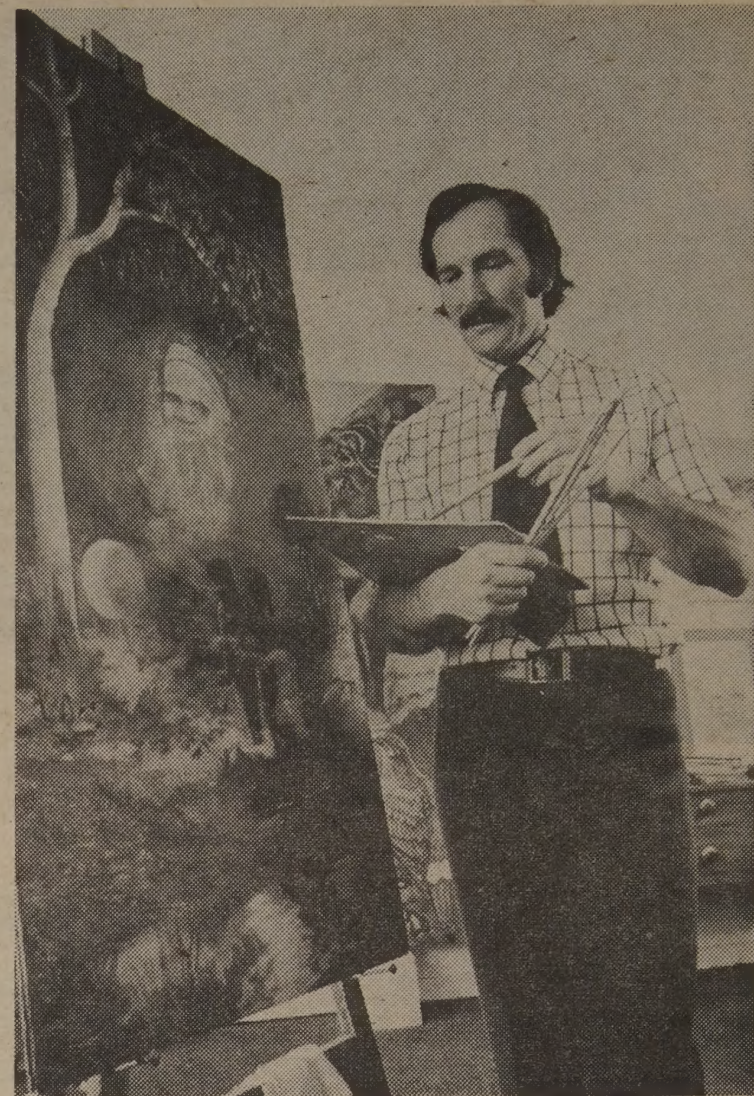
He is hoping to put on an exhibition in London of the work he has devoted the last six years to painting, and that people will be inspired to take an interest in the Aborigines' fate.

"How sad it would be if the world should lose for ever the culture of these very remarkable people because of our own indifference," he said.

Building ships and helping spastics

DURHAM shipworkers have collected £100 for spastics during the past year. A cheque for this amount was presented by Mr. Billy Hughes, chairman of the shop stewards' committee at Sunderland Shipbuilders, to the Mayor of Sunderland, Councillor George Park, who received it on behalf of the Sunderland and District Spastics Society.

The money will be used to help with building costs of a new £22,000 extension at the group's centre.



Maurice Lindars at work. Picture by courtesy of the Oxford Mail

Poems to express 'inner personality'

MR. Gordon Hill's wife works with spastic children at a hospital and day centre near their home in Ulverston, Lancs., and "seeing the children occasionally and hearing of them frequently," has, he says, had a great influence on him. As a result, Mr. Hill told *Spastics News*, he tried to pin down his impressions and this has culminated in the two poems he sent to us to share with readers.

The poem "Denise" was written about a spastic child who stayed with the Hills last summer as a holiday foster child, and the subject of "To a spastic, chairbound," is a boy treated at Mrs. Hill's clinic.

Says Mr. Hill: "So many people—myself included—until a few years ago seemed to think that a spastic's mental development is naturally as im-

paired as they see his body to be. So often inside a blighted body it strikes me that a beautiful personality is struggling for expression. This is the particular aspect I'm trying to clarify in my poems."

TO A SPASTIC, CHAIRBOUND

Your jewel eyes
as you slide
lopsided, limp,
straining webbing
glisten.
Hot lights
of soulfire,
defy
slack distance,
believe
your dumb body's
resistance.
Those eyes,
all essence
distil, reflect
an age's
warm caring.

DENISE

You small
sideways slanting girl
shoulderstrapped and staring,
staring at my cheek over cheese
doing your bubbledrinking
and being stickily present
at our holiday household,
bringing warmth
and a fetching daddy-dependence,
holding us with your disobedient fingers
still moist from flower clutching.

£4,000 donation

A sponsored ploughing marathon held last autumn by members of Shrewsbury Young Farmers' Club raised £500. The money has been presented to the Shropshire Spastics Society to be used at the group's special care unit for severely handicapped children.

The fund for an extension to the Spastics Unit at Maelor General Hospital, Wrexham, Denbighshire, has received a boost of £4,000. This was raised jointly by Wrexham and District Handicapped Children's Society and the North Wales Spina Bifida Association.

The unit, which opened in 1960, now caters for all types of handicapped children, not just spastics.

Roger Moore will not be cast as 'do gooder'—but his concern is very sincere

James Bond was seen to enter the offices of a certain well-known national charity last month. What desperate deeds were being hatched behind that respectable, pillared facade? Had the intrepid 007 been called in to rescue the nation's welfare services from the diabolical machinations of SMERSH?

The reality, of course, was nothing more alarming than a committee meeting of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, of which Roger Moore is this year's chairman. Roger, who is the latest actor to star in James Bond films, based on a series of novels by the late Ian Fleming, has belonged to the S.O.S. for some years.

This is an association of show business people, formed in 1955, to help raise money for spastics. Although the organisation is administratively a part of The Spastics Society, its members independently started up, and continue to run, Wakes Hall residential centre for adult spastics in Essex and Colwall Court children's holiday home in Sussex. An important new project is also to be opened in London later this year.

Roger Moore says it is difficult in show business not to be aware of the need for charity, because so many stars are called upon to appear at fund-raising events.

'Selfish'

"The profession has its share of selfish people who demand fees for their appearances," he said, and added that he was impressed by the amount of voluntary work for spastics which has been done by former S.O.S. chairmen, and indeed, all the members who have made sacrifices of time and potential income.

"They made me realise my inadequacies," he said modestly. He remarked that most actors ought to think "My God, I'm lucky!" by comparison with severely handicapped people.

He had no experience of disability in his own family, except that a great aunt adopted a mongol child, "But they didn't live near us, so we saw very little of them."

After the great aunt's death, the handicapped lady was taken into hospital where she still lives happily, visited regu-

larly by members of her adoptive family.

Roger was born and brought up in London and says his schooling was severely disrupted because of the war. After the war, however, he successfully completed a course at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

'Saintly' years

Perhaps the part which established him as one of the country's best-known stars was that of Simon Templar in "The Saint" series, on television. This, he says with typically self-deprecating humour, was "inflicted weekly on the public for six and a half years."

Later he went to Hollywood for some years and starred with Tony Curtis in "The Persuaders," which won an award for the best television series of its kind.

Then came the chance to take over the leading role created by Sean Connery in the James Bond films, and he was able to establish a permanent home in Britain for his family. He and his Italian wife, Luisa, have three children, Deborah, aged 10, Geoffrey, seven and baby Christian, who was born last summer.

Luisa worked as an actress before she had the children,

"But the only acting she does now is at home!" joked Roger.

They live at Denham, Buckinghamshire, conveniently close to Pinewood Studios, where the non-location scenes of his films are shot.

The first film in which Roger played James Bond was "Live and Let Die," released last summer. Work will shortly begin on his second in the series, "The Man With the Golden Gun," which will be shot mainly in the Far East. Already a judo expert, Roger is learning Kung-Fu for the film. This latest cinematic craze is, he says, the most energetic of the arts of self-defence.

New film

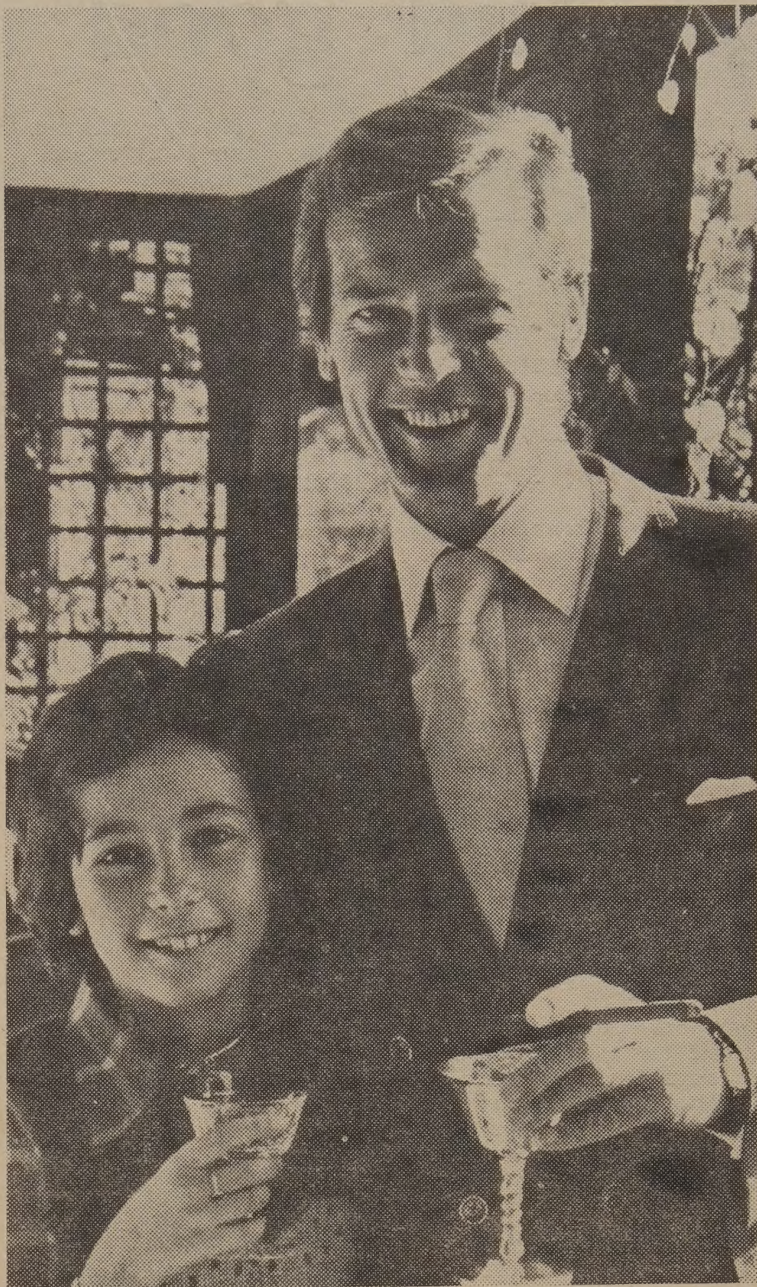
Slotted in between these two James Bond epics was another film called "Gold," which is just being completed at Pinewood. In this, Roger abandons his usual Secret Agent/Private Eye type of role to play the manager of a South African gold mine. The villains of the piece plan to flood the mine and make a fortune by causing chaos on the stock markets.

Why, I asked, had he agreed to take over the chairmanship of the S.O.S. at just this particular time when he has so many film commitments? He replied evasively that the idea was sprung on him one day at lunch by last year's chairman, Dickie Henderson.

"He appealed to my better nature by saying they needed a younger chairman — flatter an actor and you'll get anything done!"

It is difficult to persuade Roger Moore to talk seriously about his personal feelings, but he made some perceptive remarks on conditions in South Africa from which it was obvious that he cares a great deal about social inequality.

He spent two months in and around Johannesburg on location for the film "Gold," and says that it is impossible not to notice the effects of apartheid. Work on the film was disrupted by labour problems with ACTT, the British film technicians' union which has



Roger Moore with his daughter Deborah, aged 10. The picture was taken at the Christening party of his youngest child born in August 1973.

"blackened" South Africa and Greece because of their political regimes.

However, Roger says that the situation is considerably more complex than it appears to the outsider and he feels that sanctions are not the answer. The withdrawal of foreign trade brings more unemployment to South Africa and the black inhabitants are usually the first to suffer.

"Anyway, I haven't noticed that anyone's stopped buying gold," he remarked caustically. I began to suspect that

under the wisecracking, professional tough-guy exterior here was somebody deeply concerned about people who have missed out on life's advantages.

This, though he won't admit it, could be the real reason why Roger Moore agreed to become chairman of the Stars Organisation for Spastics.

Anne Plummer

Staff raise funds for teaching machine

AN appeal has been launched to buy a special £1,000 teaching machine for the most severely disabled children at White Lodge Spastics Centre, Chertsey, Surrey.

Normally, it is only possible to tell whether such a child has understood what he is being taught by his eye movements, but the use of this electronic equipment called a "touch-tutor" enables teachers and therapists to communicate more easily with their pupils.

The machine, operated by the child, will show, for example, the word "dog" on a screen, accompanied by three pictures, only one of which is a dog. At the same time the machine speaks the word. Each programme with a different series of words, pictures and sound costs £25.

The appeal has been started by therapy staff at the centre. It is hoped, with the goodwill of local firms and the general public, to have raised the money by the end of 1974.

Michael wants a pen friend

MR. Michael Murrin, aged 23, from Camborne, Cornwall, would like a pen friend who is interested in pop music. He is a fan of Sacha Distel and Englebert Humperdinck, and enjoys most television programmes.

He is a resident of Gladys Holman House, the Society's adult residential centre in Cornwall, where he polishes stone for jewellery in the workshop. During the holidays he stays with his parents in Exeter, where he goes to local speedway meetings.

Please contact Mr. Murrin direct at Gladys Holman House, Rosewarne, Camborne, Cornwall.

Now gardener will paint flowers

Nellie de Beaufort Saunders who, although disabled, worked in winds and rain as a gardener at Hampden Hall, County Farm, Stoke Mandeville has retired after nearly 20 years at the farm.

For the last eight years she

had worked indoors on the administrative side following a hip operation. She was also well known as "The Lady in White", the pseudonym she used for the children's page she wrote for The Bucks Herald. Pictured at her retire-

ment presentation, she was given a box of water colours and paint brushes to continue her other hobby of floral art.

Picture by courtesy of The Bucks Herald.



Appeal to buy young poet a Light-writer

THE Rotaract Club of Ewell, Surrey, believes that charity begins at home. Members aim to raise £450 to buy a Light-writer for local student Richard Gomm, and started the fund last month by holding a fashion show.

Richard, aged 21, a former student of the Society's Thomas Delarue School, was the male winner of the poetry section in last year's literary contest for spastics. He is now studying for 'A' levels in sociology and economics at Ewell Technical College.

Depending on the results of the examinations in June, he has been offered a place to read philosophy at York University. He is also being considered for Sussex University, where a special wing for handicapped people is being built.

At present Richard communicates with a letter board, spelling out the words by means of a "unicorn" strapped to his head. This attachment also enables him to type, so he would benefit considerably from a Light-writer. This is a variety of type-

writer in which sentences light up and move across a panel, like a teleprinter, as the operator presses the keys.

Last year, Richard Gomm published an outstanding book of first poems, "The Seasons of My Life."

Copies (price 75p each) can be purchased from The Spastics Society's Bookshop, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. The book would make an ideal Easter present for anybody who appreciates good poetry.

MR. Ronald Angell of Daresbury Hall Residential Centre for Spastics, Daresbury, near Warrington, Lancashire, would like a male pen friend, aged about 33, whose interests are football and cricket.

Please address replies direct to Mr. Angell at Daresbury Hall.

At last—a Minister for the Disabled and good news on cars

MARCH brought news of two great victories for the handicapped that they have been waiting for a very long time. The first was the announcement that the Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson, was appointing a Minister for the Disabled, and the next was the release of the Baroness Sharp report on Mobility of the Physically Disabled.

For the first time in legislative history the disabled will have their own Minister to turn to in the shape of Mr. Alfred Morris. With the official title of Minister for the Disabled, Mr. Morris will be representing well over three million people who are registered as having some degree of disability.

He is no stranger to their cause, for three and a half years ago he introduced the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Bill in the House of Commons.

Talking of the Bill to Spastics News last year on the third anniversary of it becoming law, Mr. Morris said: "The big difference was that before, if you were disabled, you had to go along and make yourself known—not easy if you're severely handicapped, housebound and alone. Now it is the duty of the local authorities—they MUST find you and help you, it's no longer your job to tell them and ask them for benefit."

Now, as Minister, he will have the maximum opportunity to see that local authorities live up to their statutory obligations.

Last week Mr. Morris told Spastics News: "I was delighted to hear from Spastics News so soon after my appointment. The task facing me is both new and challenging. My appointment will, of course, make it possible for me to continue my efforts to help all disabled people. It is the first

time, I believe, that a Minister for the Disabled has been appointed anywhere in the world."

He added: "Some people have expressed criticism of the idea of a separate Ministry, on the grounds that it would segregate the disabled further, but I've worked to integrate the disabled all my life. I want to integrate handicapped people into a normal society instead of them being treated as apart. In fact, many who had reservations have been the first to come forward to say they are glad that I've been appointed."

One of the first to welcome the appointment was Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, and the man who, over 10 years ago, first stressed the need for such a post.

Our campaign

"It was in a speech at Durham University that we advocated a Minister for the Handicapped," he recalled, "and the Society has been campaigning ever since. We welcome the establishment of the post and Alf Morris' appointment to it. But we very much hope that the post will be a reality and extend its influence beyond the Department of Health and Social Security. Also we hope that Mr. Morris, although a Junior Minister, will have the right to deal directly with all the major departments concerned with the handicapped

and have direct remittance from the Prime Minister to influence their policies."

Mrs. Barbara Castle, within three weeks of taking office as Secretary of State for Health and Social Services, was able to release the vital Baroness Sharp Report.

The Baroness, in her report, said that the case for replacing the much criticised three-wheeler was "overwhelming." However, she also suggested that the Government should introduce eligibility tests and these would eventually deny transport help to about 13,500

at £13 million and the cost is being kept down by the proposal that only those who need the cars to support themselves or their families will be entitled to them. At present severe disablement in itself entitles a Health Service applicant to a vehicle.

However, Mrs. Castle, in a Commons speech, has said: "Any proposal to withdraw a vehicle from those now having the use of one would in our view be wrong." Those disabled and not eligible for a car on job dependency grounds will be entitled to continue with the three-wheelers but only as long as stocks last. They face a housebound future unless provision can be made for them.

"Poor value"

In her 23,000 word report, Lady Sharp had no hesitation in saying that one of her earliest findings was that the three-wheeler was "very poor value for money."

She found that the vast majority of the disabled were definite about preferring an adapted car although there were a very few who not only liked the three-wheeler but would be unable to drive anything else. They, too, will be faced with no transport when stocks end, just as those who are not entitled to a car by job dependency.

"Shocked"

Mr. Loring commented on the report: "It is a plain case of giving with one hand and taking with the other."

"The report at last is the first official condemnation of the three-wheeler and as such is much overdue. We welcome the proposal that four-wheelers should be substituted for the notoriously unsafe three-wheeler, but we are shocked by the proposal that some who are now qualified for official transport may in future be debarred. The sole criteria should not be job dependence, but social need. In some respects those qualified by job-dependence need transport less than those who have no jobs."

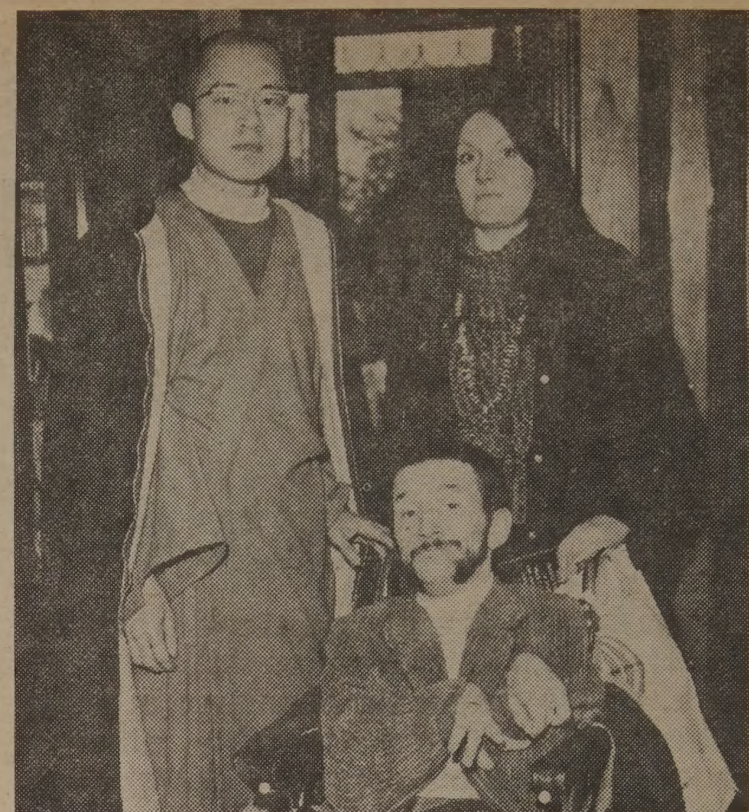


Mr. Alf Morris

disabled drivers now using the tricycles.

Lady Sharp recommends that the disabled should be given suitably adapted small cars, and estimated that this would cost at least £3 million extra a year once the transition period, which would inevitably be costly, was over.

At present the three-wheelers criticised as being: "Dangerous, noisy, uncomfortable and liable to breakdown," cost almost £10 million. The annual bill for the cars is estimated



FOR most people Easter is a commercial festival celebrated with gay chocolate eggs. For John Williams, finalist in this year's Spastics Society Achievement Award, and his companion, Joanne O'Gorman, it will be a time of unusual and special calm. They are spending five days of Easter week at Samyeeling, the Tibetan Zen Buddhist retreat at Aviemore, Scotland.

Pictured with John and Joanne is their mentor, Maitreya, who has founded a centre for his teachings in Nottingham. It was Joanne who was first influenced by Maitreya's teaching and she introduced John last year in Brighton. Maitreya, who has travelled the world preaching his Buddhist philosophy after leaving his home in Japan, came to Brighton, where John is at Sussex University reading for his Master of Philosophy degree. Joanne studies at the local Art College and occasionally acts as John's helper.

Said Maitreya: "John is one of my very best pupils—he has a very aware mind. My teaching is very simple—it is a search for truth and gives great peace of mind to those who understand. It is

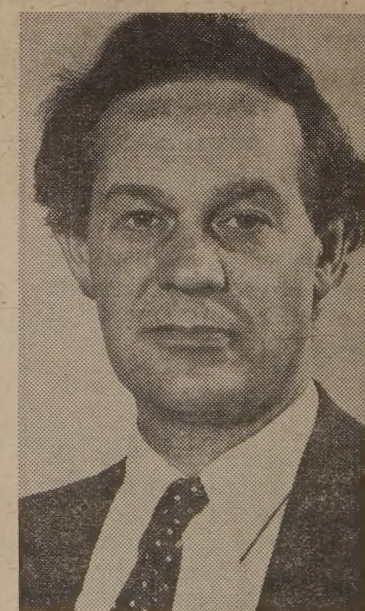
the mind that is important—it does not matter what the body is like. John has very great qualities of meditation."

John, who is confined to a wheelchair and unable to speak, communicates with the aid of a word-board.

Farewell to John Price

MR. John Price, the Society's Assistant Director, Finance, is leaving the Society to become Financial Controller of the British Standards Institution. During his 12 years with the Society, Mr. Price has been a popular executive at the London headquarters, and well known to local group members throughout the country to whom he has always been ready to provide advice on financial matters. For example, he introduced the local group investment scheme to help groups increase income, and helped them with insurance problems.

Mr. Price has always tried to make complex financial matters comprehensible to the layman, and an example of this policy



Mr. John Price

is to be seen in the current Annual Report, where simple graphs, charts and diagrams explain the Society's finances.

During his time as the Society's "money man," Mr. Price has worked closely with the Executive Council and the Society's investment advisers to steer the Society's financial ship through the troubled waters of inflation, rising costs and the declining value of the £. "These have been busy, challenging years working for a very worthwhile cause," Mr. Price told Spastics News.

At the last meeting of the Society's senior staff there was an ovation for Mr. Price and many good wishes for future success from his colleagues.



Last month we told the story of how Vera Panchuk found romance instead of a job when she went to Arthur Carr's Rehabilitation and Advisory Service in London.

Our picture shows Vera with her husband-to-be, Pat Webb (right), and Arthur Carr with some of Vera's paintings. There has been a hold-up in Pat and Vera's wedding planned for this month. It has been postponed while

they look for a home in London. Vera lives in Stamford Hill and is closely involved in a number of activities such as the East London Handicapped Club run by The Spastics Society's Achievement Award winner, Linda Berwick. Pat has a house in Portslade, Sussex, and, rather than take Vera away from London, they have decided to look for a home in the city.

But does the Minister 'set disabled apart?'

BRITAIN'S first Minister for the Disabled should be a temporary appointment, according to Hereford and Worcester's Director of Social Services, Mr. David Tombs.

At The Spastics Society's sixth annual Midland Region Conference at Leicester University on Sunday, March 31st (which is being held as Spastics News goes to press), he will be "exploring this question" when he addresses over 400 people including parents, Directors of Social Services, other professionals working with the disabled, and the handicapped themselves.

He says: "I will be exploring the question of whether the Government is right in appointing a Minister for the Disabled. Singling out the disabled sets them apart. There may be short term advantages in improving services, but once this has been achieved I hope the role will be phased out and the disabled will be looked after by the same

departments that provide services for everyone else."

Mr. Tombs' view contradicts the Society's own philosophy, as it has campaigned consistently for the appointment of such a Minister for many years now.

However, the Society lacks dogmatism and is always ready to listen to divergent views.

The Conference will be looking at "the Handicapped Family in Tomorrow's World." Amongst the speakers at the

Conference will be Mr. Roger Jefcoate, who will be talking about the sophisticated electronic aids which are being developed for the disabled.

Birmingham's Director of Nursing Services, Miss P. Greening, will be trying to reassure those who are worried that the re-organisation of the Health Service programmed to start officially on May 1st "will not adversely affect the help the disabled receive, but that it may improve certain services."

The Spastics Society's Director, Mr. James Loring, will also be addressing the delegates.

Conference Chairman will be the Duke of Rutland.

Feet streak for funds

STREAKING feet raised over £180 for spastics and blind children on Teesside last month.

Barefoot, Mr. David Fisher ran 90 miles in 11 hours in order to collect the money from sponsors. It was divided between Teesside Spastics Society and a Middlesbrough school for the blind.

Mr. Fisher finished the day with feet swathed in bandages.

Warden says farewell to his 'family'

AFTER almost six years as Warden of the Princess Marina Centre, Seer Green, Bucks., Mr. Sidney Cleaver and his wife Marie are leaving this month to start a new life "Down Under".

"Our daughter and her family already live in the North Island of New Zealand, our two sons are on their way there and we sail from Southampton on April 16," said Mr. Cleaver.

After serving in the army, Mr. Cleaver spent 19 years in the Overseas Civil Service in Uganda with the Ministry of Education.

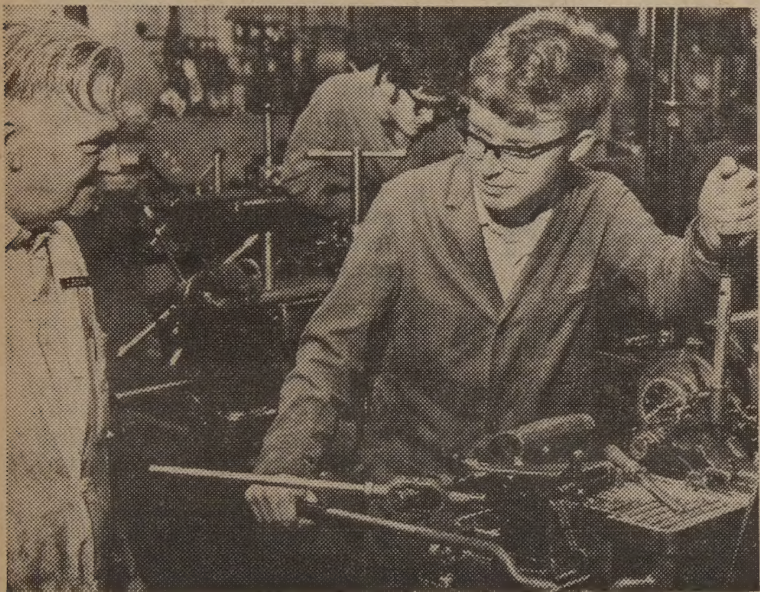
Africanisation of jobs meant a premature retirement and he returned to England and became Bursar at Meldreth Manor School which is run by The Spastics Society. He was at Meldreth for two years before going to the Princess Marina Centre, which was then called Ponds, before its renaming in honour of the Society's former Patron.

"It was a wrench leaving Uganda but not nearly as much of one as leaving here

is going to be" said Mr. Cleaver. "When I came here the residents were mostly teenagers. They have matured considerably. I've had a very liberal attitude and done away with a lot of restrictions and regulations. I'm told I've been a 'Father' to them but I've tried not to over-do the paternal bit because they are all adults. Certainly they are like a large family to me and they are known as 'the family'—not 'residents'."

"I've enjoyed devoting myself to the Centre—I'm a much better person now than when I joined and I've got much more out of it than I've put in. But I'm over 60 now and I really feel it is time for a younger person to take over—a younger man would be good for 'the family'."

Mr. Cleaver hopes to be able to continue his interest in the care of the cerebral palsied in New Zealand, although he has no definite plans yet.



Trainee Kevin Rafferty turns drain pipes for car radiators in the well-equipped workshops at Lancaster. On the left is instructor Mr. J. Wrathall.

Spastics prepare to meet challenge

Continued from Page 4

which they cater and generally purchase their needs.

In this way they glean some idea of what they will have to do when after work outside they will perhaps have to live alone, or in twos in digs. The majority of the trainees do very well, said one of the staff.

The Training Centre is a place of perpetual motion, for every two weeks the departure of trainees leaving for jobs, and new arrivals starting their course, provide a constant procession of new faces. The clinical advantage of this is that emotionally dependent trainees do not become attached to each other and the constant changes help trainees to understand more clearly the sort of life to expect away from the Centre.

Spastics, despite their disabilities, are normally very happy people but, like everyone else, they are human and have their moods and feelings. "All spastics are not children," said Mr. Parkinson, "and all handicapped people are not angels." So that one encounters among spastics as among any group of normal people the same glow-

ing virtues and the same assorted vices.

Be that as it may, the Training Centre maintains the status quo in which the trainees' personal lives are respected, their welfare and happiness assured, and the work and training progress expected of them is forthcoming.

Once upon a time the disabled were the unwanted and neglected, the forgotten people. But with the years has come concern, compassion, money for research, and finally cures. Not for every disease it is true, but for many.

Let us hope that the traditional fairy tale beginning of the nursery stories we loved as children because of their happy ending, "Once upon a time" will come true soon for the spastics, finding a prevention for this Cinderella of complaints still with us.

Article and pictures reproduced by courtesy of the Lancaster Guardian.

A dance organised at Pontin's Holiday Camp, Paignton, Devon, by Mr. Alan Rosewall, raised £200 for the Devon and Exeter Spastics Society.



Gifts for Meldreth children

Mr. A. W. Brown, centre right in the picture above, Principal of the Society's Meldreth Manor School in Hertfordshire, receives a cheque for £160 from Mrs. Shirley Basham, Chairman of the Royston Ladies' Circle. Other Circle members look on.

The Circle raised the money with a Toy Fair, held after leaflets had been distributed to 2,500 homes in the area appealing for second-hand playthings.

The items collected were then renovated by members of the Ladies' Circle and their families, ready for sale in aid of spastics.

The money will be used for the Meldreth School Improvements Fund, and help to finance a horticultural unit and an adventure playground.

Picture by courtesy of Herts and Cambs. Reporter and Royston Crow



The Young Friends of Meldreth Manor have bought two specially-designed tables for wheelchair-bound pupils.

These Amesbury tables have semi-circles cut out of each side to allow greater access for wheelchairs and they can be adjusted to different heights.

Picture above, shows the handing-over of one of the

tables. Standing, left to right, are Jean Tweed, Head of Meldreth's Apple Tree House, Mary Pettit and Gillian Lindsell, of the Young Friends group and John Knox, head of Pear Tree House. Seated are pupils of the school, Anne Johnson, Sean Went and Catherine Anderson.

Picture by courtesy of Mr. Edge.

Your shopping basket for April

EASTER eggs and holidays, April fools and bonnets, the children home from school and all the spring cleaning to do... that, together with showers and sunshine, is the month ahead.

Most of it is light-hearted fun, even the curtain and paint washing, the renovating and refurbishing can be tackled with enthusiasm as long as you don't get over-wrought and tired. Take a break during the day, don't carry on regardless with "no time" to stop and rest. Food provides energy, a glass of milk, a chunk of cheese with an apple can hardly take ages to get ready, but the difference it will make to your supply of elbow grease in the afternoon will be remarkable. Try it.

Shopping for the month, including the Easter break, should not cause anxious headaches, even if funds are low. Don't be afraid of asking for the cheaper cuts of home-produced meat, they are just as nutritious and flavoursome as expensive cuts and, let's face it, you can safely leave a stew in a low oven for hours while you take the kids out for the day and relax.

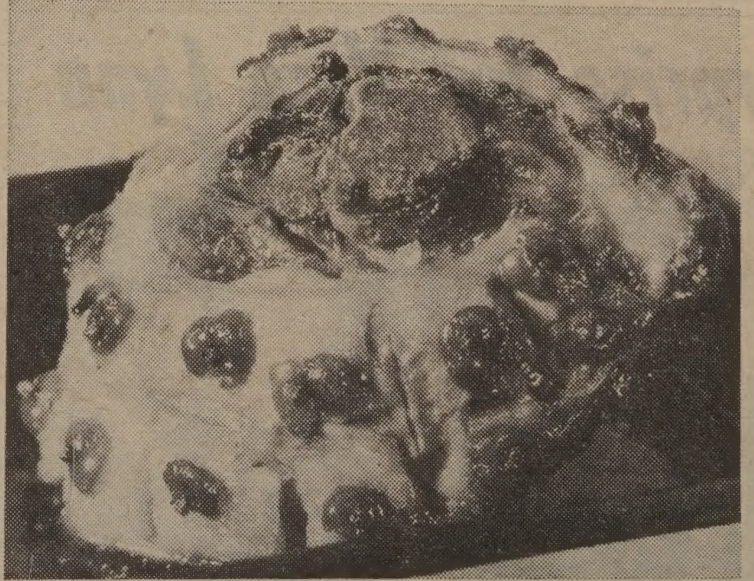
For the Easter meal, poultry, whether you have oven-ready, chilled or fresh plucked, will be reasonably priced and if you get a large bird, sufficient to last at least two days, you can take cold joints out with you on a picnic, far quicker than cutting sandwiches!

Although some of our main-crop vegetables are beginning to get scarce now, and on the tatty side, there is the happy situation of more home-grown salad ingredients to be had,

The first of the English tomatoes, for instance, will be about. Not cheap, but certainly delicious. More cucumbers will be arriving in the shops all the time, and no one needs to be told how good they are. Then lettuces, salad onions, watercress, will be fuller and crisper and better and more tempting than ever. This, of course, is very handy for those who are

desperately trying to push winter - thickened figures into last year's warm-weather clothes.

Most of us will be entertaining at sometime during the month, and here is a recipe that serves nine to 12 people and which makes the most of British or Ulster bacon. It looks as good as it tastes and makes a colourful dish!



HONEYBOY BACON (serves 9-12)

4½ lb. British or Ulster gammon
1 bottle Maraschino cherries
½ oz. cloves
1 lb. clear English honey
Salt
Black pepper
4 oz. redcurrant jelly

Soak bacon (six hours if smoked, two hours if green). Simmer for one and a half hours in a large pan. Remove

the brown skin and score the fat lattice-fashion with a sharp knife. Drain cherries, reserving the syrup. Cut the cherries in half and stud these over the surface of the bacon with cloves. Put bacon in a roasting tin. Add syrup from cherries to the honey, seasonings and redcurrant jelly, and heat gently until the jelly is melted. Brush over the bacon. Bake in the centre of a fairly hot oven, 425° F. Mark 7, for 40 minutes, basting frequently.

Honestly, we just don't know

WHAT do they think we get up to? The Spastics Society recently received a letter from Yugoslavia seeking information on equipment for leisure and sports.

Among the pursuits they itemised were: "Archery, javelins, handball, volley-ball, and... bomb throwing."

* * *

Teesside Spastics Society has received over £250 from Thornaby Central Townswomen's Guild and The Old Vic Social Club, North Ormesby, Yorkshire.

* * *

A Ball held at R.A.F. Little Rissington raised £900 for the Cheltenham and District Spastics Association. Part of the money will be spent on equipment for the activities room at the group's day care centre.

* * *

A dance held in aid of the Society's Wilfred Pickles School near Stamford, Lincolnshire, raised nearly £500.

* * *

A variety concert held at Isleworth Working Men's Club, Middlesex, brought in £100 for spastics at Harperbury Hospital, St. Albans. The concert was organised by Mr. Gus Sanders.

* * *

A charity ball held by Boston and District Branch of The Spastics Society raised £318.74.

* * *

The Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics has received £478 as the result of a fair held at North Berwick.

BITS AND PIECES by The Collector

The Oakham Spastics Society, Rutland, is building a seaside holiday chalet at Chapel St. Leonards, Lincolnshire. It is on a site being newly developed, which will include such amenities as a swimming pool and supermarket, which will be available to holidaymakers at the chalet.

* * *

Barrow Ladies' Circle, Lancashire, has presented £200 to the local Spastics and Handicapped Centre. This was the proceeds of a charity ball held by the Circle.

* * *

Rugby Spastics Society, formed only last summer, has already collected more than £500 to buy and equip a holiday caravan.

* * *

A charity ball held at the Market Hall, Redhill, Surrey, brought in about £400 for the South East Surrey Spastics Group.

* * *

With the help of Margate Carnival Association, the Thanet Spastics Society has been able to present a £442 radiant warmer to Margate Hospital. The equipment will be used for babies who need resuscitation at birth, to minimise the possibility of brain damage.

* * *

A street collection held in Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, has brought in £148 for the Manchester and District Spastics Society.

Bleak Budget

Continued from Page 1
then came the Budget. This brings a possible rise in essential costs estimated as high as £100,000 a year, plus an increase of over six per cent in betting duty which Director Mr. James Loring told Spastics News was "a bitter blow" to the Spastics Pool, the Society's main source of income.

As Spastics News went to Press, headquarters staff were anxiously studying the detailed provisions of the Budget, and the following increases in expenditure quickly became clear:—

Postal and Telephone Charges: An estimated rise of about £20,000. The increase in postal charges are a particularly hard blow because of the important part played in fund-raising by direct mail appeal.

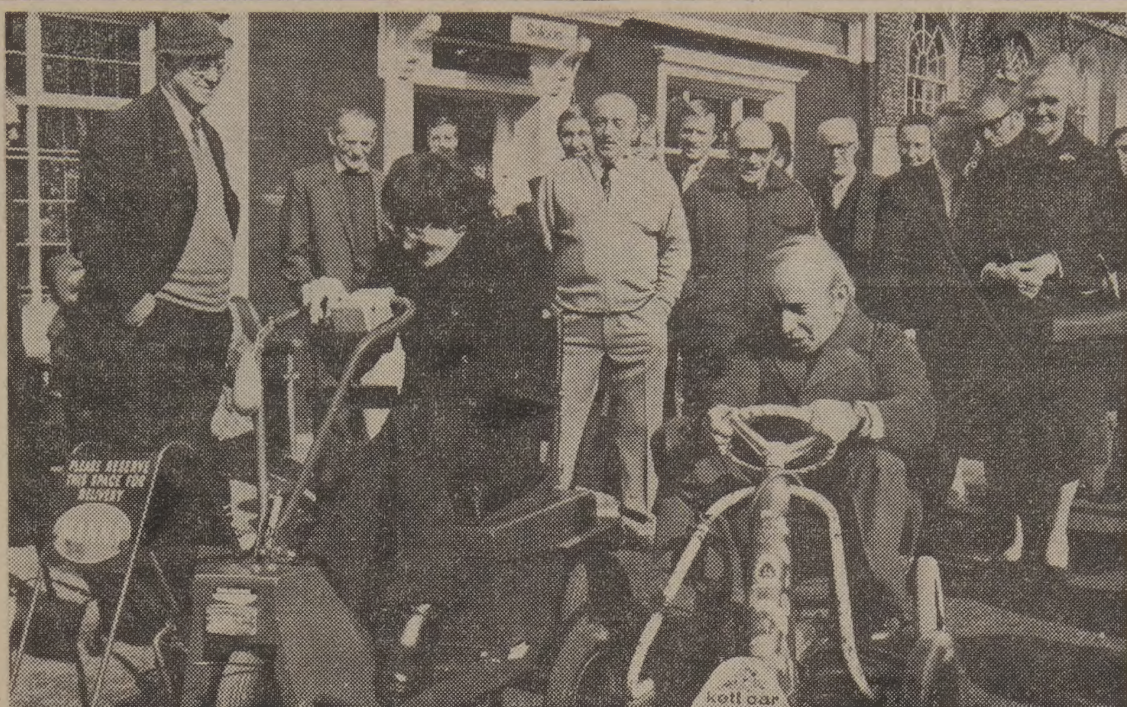
Fuel: Already suffering from a rise in heating costs in schools and centres for spastics, the Society will now face increased electricity bills, plus the 10 per cent rise in petrol prices, which will add enormously to transport costs.

Steel: The 25 per cent increase will affect building costs of new centres and of ambulances and motor vehicles.

Increased Employers' National Insurance Contributions: This is particularly serious for the Society, which has 1,700 employees. (Heavily handicapped spastics in the Society's centres need a very high ratio of staff to care for them). Depending on the detailed proposals, it is estimated that the rise of 44p per person per week will cost the Society between £30,000 and £40,000 in a full year.

Only two announcements in the Budget were welcomed by the Society. The increase in income tax will slightly improve the Society's gross income from Deeds of Covenant, but it must not be forgotten that previous Budgets have reduced the Covenant income as the tax rates have changed. The second provision welcomed was the zero VAT rating on equipment for the disabled. "Apart from these provisions, the Budget was entirely bleak as far as charities are concerned," said Mr. Loring.

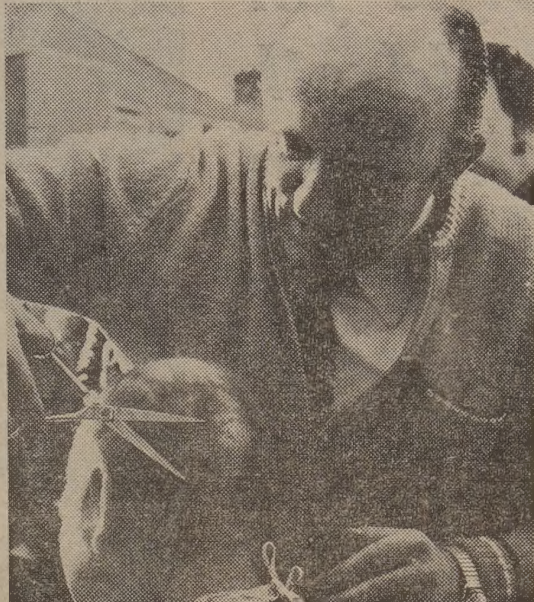
The proceeds of a Mayoral Ball held at Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire, amounted to £214.33. This sum has been donated to Barrow and District Spastic and Handicapped Children's society.



The chequered flag has gone down and Freddie and John Surtees roar off at the start of their race down Greenwich High Street.



And that was not all that was off—for here (picture left) Peter Rice not only lost his bet that the money for Freddie's chair would not be raised in time—he loses his hair as well. Picture, right, shows Publican Possnicker, scissors in hand.



Shorn—for the sake of Freddie

JOHN Surtees first gained fame on motor cycles and then switched to racing Formula One cars, but recently he found himself at the helm of a very different vehicle. He hurtled down Greenwich High Street in a pedal go-kart while his adversary, 21-year-old spastic Freddie Williams, steered his way to victory in an electric wheelchair.

Freddie's go-kart had broken down and it was feared he would be housebound, until Ken Possnicker of the Greenwich pub "The Plume of Feathers" heard of his plight. He laid on a massive fund-raising campaign which ended when Freddie was presented

with the wheelchair by John Surtees, who wished him the best of luck and warned him not to go too fast.

Freddie's gain was pub regular Peter Rice's loss. For he had had a bet with his landlord that the money would not be raised in time for the chair's delivery.

The price of failure was the Rice locks. Publican Possnicker and Racing Champ Surtees turned their attention to the Rice pate and speedily sheared away his hair. A beer rinse followed the cropping and, when asked what his wife would think of his new style, Peter's reply was "Ugh!"

Birthday surprise for Vera Lynn

IT could have been just a straightforward general meeting of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, but for founder-member Vera Lynn it turned out to be a huge birthday surprise.

Nearly 40 stars of the entertainment world crowded into the large committee room at the Society's Headquarters in Park Crescent to wish her a happy birthday, and they were joined by S.O.S. President, the Hon. Mrs. James Ogilvy; Mr. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, and his wife, Anita; Mr. Dorrien Belson, Chairman of the Executive Council, and Mr. William Burn, a former Chairman, and his wife.

Before the serious part of the meeting got under way, S.O.S. Chairman Roger Moore took the opportunity of presenting Vera with a colourful birthday cake to mark the S.O.S.'s good wishes. Vera is herself a former S.O.S. Chairman and is now a Vice-President.



Mr. Dorrien Belson, Chairman of the Society's Executive Council, with S.O.S. President the Hon. Mrs. James Ogilvy, and Mr. William Burn, Executive Council member and former Chairman of the Society.

Now spastic is a Minister

AS March 17th is St. Patrick's Day, it is usually considered a great day for the Irish, but this year it was a great day for one particular Scot, Graham Monteith.

Graham, a spastic aged 27, was ordained a Minister of the Church of Scotland.

Graham, who was born in Glasgow but considers Tranent, East Lothian, where his parents live, as his home, has been carrying out community work in the parish of St. Andrew's, Drumchapel, Glasgow, for the last six

months. Now he feels he has been accepted by the people of the district despite the severity of his handicap. It was his mother's devotion, encouragement and practical help in transcribing all his written work that enabled him to carry on through school to the University of Edinburgh, of which he is an Arts and Divinity graduate, and to York University, where he took his Philosophy degree.

Graham will assist the Rev. James Stewart, minister of St. Andrew's, in his new role of curate.

International sports event

FOR the first time ever an International Spastics Games meeting is to be held this year. It will take place at the National Sports Centre, Crystal Palace, London, on July 22nd and 23rd, and it is hoped that teams from many countries will participate in the event.

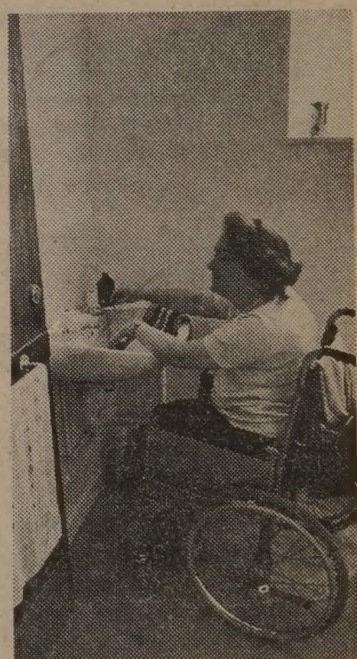
A small social programme is being arranged, which will enable overseas competitors to see something of London before they leave England.

Civic Trust commends Habinteg

HABINTEG, the housing association for the handicapped which is sponsored by The Spastics Society, has been commended by the Civic Trust for its very first development, the flats at Moira Close, Haringey.

The Civic Trust gives 10 awards each year to architects whose designs are both aesthetic as well as functional, and this year the judges were looking at housing in London Boroughs.

Habinteg's Administrative Assistant, Miss Kathy Williams, said: "This is the first time Habinteg has entered



All the equipment in Habinteg homes is designed to make life easier for the disabled.

any kind of competition and we're absolutely thrilled with the commendation because literally hundreds of schemes were submitted for judging.

"The judges were very pleased with the Habinteg development's appearance despite its rather unattractive surroundings. It was built to a strict financial limit, yet it is still attractive, and this is an example of what can be done — yet local authorities with the same financial yardstick build monstrous slabs.

"The commendation is the first of any kind of award Habinteg has got, and it is a great feather in our cap."

"New look" brings closer links with voluntary workers

THE Spastics Society's staff and committee structure has a "new look" from April 1st, as a result of a wide-ranging review of the organisation by the Executive Council. The aim of the changes is to achieve maximum efficiency and even closer links between voluntary workers and staff.

One of the most important innovations is the bringing together of Regional and Services interests into the new Resources Committee. It will be responsible for the utilisation of the Society's physical resources and its resources in manpower at Regional and Local Group level. Chairmen of the Regional Co-ordinating Committees will be members of the Resources Committee, and in this way members of local groups through their Regional Committees will have direct access to the future policy on services to spastics.

Support

The new committee will be supported by two sub-committees, one concerned with Social Services and the other with Resources Planning.

There will also be a new Finance Committee which is the successor to the present Finance and Administration Committee, and a P.R. and Fund Raising Committee which will take over the responsibilities of the Appeals Committee but, as its name implies, will also have responsibility for Public Relations and advertising.

In addition, a new Management Board has been created which will co-ordinate the implementation of policy decisions made by the Executive Council, but will not have auth-

Glyn graduates in fast time

GLYN Vernon, 30, of Sheffield, a former pupil of the Society's Thomas Delarue School, has graduated from the Open University. He gained a B.A. degree in Humanities and Social Sciences in only three years—the shortest time in which it is possible to graduate from the O.U. He had previously been turned down for a place at Sheffield University.

We think he is probably the first spastic to graduate from the Open University, and his example will give great encouragement to others who are still collecting the required six credits towards a degree.

Swansea and District Spastics Association in South Wales was one of three charities supported this year by pupils of Dumbarton House School, Swansea. Each charity received £100 from collections made by the children.

The school has given nearly £5,000 to various charities during the past 10 years.